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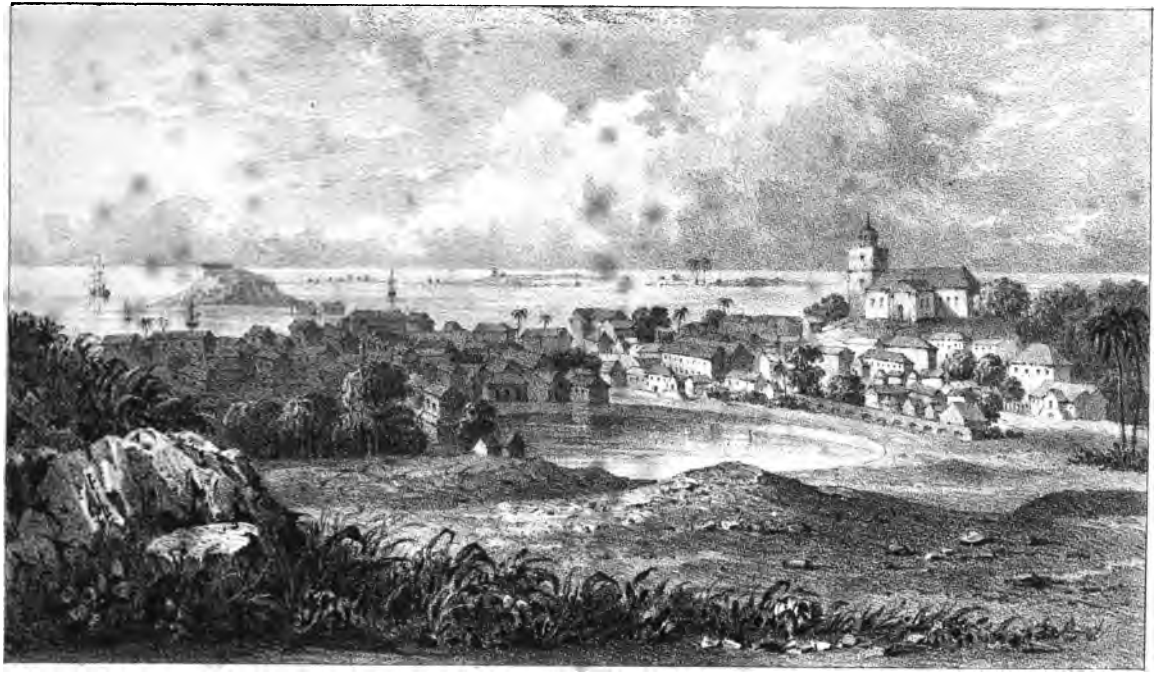

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The attention of the Binder *is directed* to those marked thus *

ERRATA.

Page 62, line 11, for *pearl* read *pure.*

— 70, — 5, for, whose *about thirty* proprietors were more than nominal owners—read, whose proprietors were more than nominal owners, and *about thirty* were, &c.

— 102, — 21, for 1722, read 1772.

THE

WEST INDIA

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CHAPTER XVIII.

BASSETERRE—SIGNS OF AFFLUENCE—STORES—PUBLIC BUILDINGS—EXTENT AND CHARACTER OF THE ISLAND—KNOT-GRASS AND GUINEA-GRASS—CAYON—PROVERBS—JELLY COCOA-NUTS—NEGRO DIALOGUE—A PORTRAIT—CATTLE CARTS—CAPTAIN DOVE—THE LODGE—PUNCH AND PIG-TAILS—CRABS—MONKEYS.

"I prithee, let me bring thee where crabs grow;
And I with my long nails will dig thee pig-nuts;
Show thee a jay's nest, and instruct thee how
To snare the nimble marmozet."

Tempest.

BASSETERRE is seen to great disadvantage after visiting the Danish colonies of Santa Cruz and Saint Thomas. It is not so extensive, nor so well built as Christianstadt, and Charlotte Amalia. The streets, which run at right angles, are mostly

unpaved, and have a deep sandy soil, yielding to the tread, and covering you with dust, and the few exceptions afford no redeeming benefit, with the chance of spraining an ancle, or snapping the tendon Achilles, in traversing the irregular flag-stones which slope from the houses towards the middle of the streets to form a gutter. Some of the habitations are built of a dark-coloured stone, others with the basement story only of that material, with a wooden superstructure, but most of them are built entirely of wood, uniformity in design or capacity seldom extending beyond half a dozen buildings in succession, without being interrupted by ill-constructed wooden tenements, or small square hovels of one or two rooms, that might be compared to bird-cages, jammed in between so many larger packages. These, in some instances, are occupied by indigent mechanics, or by coloured women who sell cakes and fruit, but they frequently appertain to the larger edifice for the accommodation of the servants; and in the open yard usually allotted behind the residence, there are often three or four or five of them, placed in such situations, and removed as convenience

may dictate. The kitchens are also detached from the dwelling. Here and there a well finished building, having an air of neatness and cleanliness afforded by paint, meets the eye, and bespeaks the superior taste, if not the opulence of the tenant; but the general aspect of the place denotes poverty and depression of trade, to which the paucity of persons seen abroad materially adds: and the shops, or stores, afford no relief in appearance either externally or within, to the prevailing effect. There are no capacious glazed fronts exhibiting in tasteful arrangement the several articles of the trader's stock; no emblazoned arms to notify distinction or pre-eminence in purveyors to his Excellency the Governor; no graining, and painting, and lettering, to engage the attention of the passer by; no "Red Lion," or "George and Dragon," to invite the traveller to alleviate his parched palate; and other metropolitan signs of a populous and affluent community are equally obsolete[1].

In the West Indies, hospitality is opposed to

[1] "Pour nous donner une idée," says a French writer, speaking of London upwards of a century ago—"du grand nombre de ses habitans, il remarque que treize cens apoticaires en prouvent l'affluence."

the well doing of inn-keepers: Old Madeira is a Catholicon to preserve health, calomel to restore it, and a *short* illness circumscribes the dimensions of a doctor's bill.

The stores, inside, are no less remarkable to a new comer, for the gloom which pervades most of them, the light being admitted into the extensive area only through a door, and perhaps one small window. Under a tropical sun, shade is naturally coveted by man for his own comfort, but in his depository for "pickled tripe, hams, ling-fish, salt butter, honey, hogs'-lard, candles, mill-grease and *gunpowder*," even damp maintains a preference over *heat;* and the effect we speak of, is materially promoted by the gloomy *exterior* of the buildings, which affords no reflected light, but rather adds to the depth of the shadows it casts. The generality of the houses inside, or that portion of them assigned to domestic intercourse, or to such business avocations as admit of different arrangements, is by no means gloomy, the great number of venetian windows admitting at discretion as much light and air as may be agreeable to the occupants.

The tradesman, or merchant, as he is more

commonly termed, is a sort of Caleb Quotum in commerce, his reputation and credit depending greatly upon anticipating all the wants of the community, and upon the length of his advertisements in the colonial newspapers. There is one remarkable distinction to be observed among the fraternity, which consists of those persons who deal exclusively in "dry goods," such as ironmongery, saddlery, haberdashery &c., and those who furnish articles of more general consumption; and the heterogeneal mixture of commodities in promiscuous heaps, *multifarius et omnifarium*, usually contained in their respective depôts, might lead the novice to imagine that he had got into Noah's store-room, and that the venerable cosmopolite had not only included in his viaticum ample supplies for the immediate demands both of man and beast, but that he had catered for artificial necessaries to suit the refinement of succeeding generations.

In the upper part of the town, on the boundary opposite to the beach, stands a church dedicated to Saint George. It has a square tower, whose elevation exceeds only by a few feet that of the roof which covers the main body of the building.

The whole fabric exhibited the powerful influence of a tropical atmosphere on the fragile materials of which it is built, and which had long been denied the protection of paint.

The court house, and council and assembly chambers, with the offices appertaining to them, under one roof, stand in the eastern quarter of the town, on one side of a square of about four acres in extent, denominated "the *pasture*," for no other reason that we could divine, than because it is destitute of *grass*. It is the market-place of the negroes, where they assemble to gossip and quarrel, as well as to dispose of their stock, to the infinite annoyance of the inhabitants of the surrounding buildings, who have their peace invaded by the interminable hubbub of their voices, seasoned with the compound effluvia of their persons and their cooking. It is also the place where the militia occasionally parade, and pigs, goats, and dogs enjoy their instinctive privileges.

Government house is situated in College-street, in the north-western suburbs, and at this time it was a very humble dwelling for the representative

of majesty, but it has been since converted into a very commodious and agreeable residence. Previously to quitting the town we paid our respects to his Excellency, an act which etiquette demanded of us on our arrival.

We have already noticed the form of this island, which has been compared in its outline to that of a lute, its longitudinal extremes lying *north-west* and *south-east*, the neck running in the latter direction, and having the town of Basseterre on the dexter shoulder. The extreme length is about twenty-one miles; its breadth at the broadest part about seven miles; and the road round the body by the coast, excluding the neck, extends upwards of thirty miles. It contains about sixty-eight square miles, or forty-four thousand acres, of which about thirty thousand are cultivable [1].

The road which diverges from the town in a north-easterly direction, approaches the windward coast at a distance of about two miles; the interior mountains flanking you on the left. The intermediate country abounds in objects of picturesque

[1] For a statistical account of the colony, see Appendix D.

interest, combining all the essential features of a rich and varied landscape; and the great number of windmills infuses into it a spirit of animation and cheerfulness. You will find the heat oppressive, and the roads dusty, until you approach the coast, when the sea breezes diffuse a refreshing coolness through the atmosphere, and render the journey pleasant. The estates on each side the road appeared to be suffering much from drought, and all of them were more or less overrun by a grass which is inimical to the sugar-cane, and which all the skill and perseverance of the planters could not eradicate. A small quantity of it was originally sent to the island as a present to a young lady by her sweetheart, (simple soul!) whence it gained a footing over the country; and if the execrations of the planters could aught affect him, he may have been doomed to a phytivorous diet for the rest of his life, with a fair fame to secure him a warm berth in purgatory. The grass bears the name of *knot-grass,* or nut-grass, from the small knots about the size of a small hazel-nut, which frequently occur in a fibrous root, and from which the grass is propagated, the fibres destroy-

ing, or retarding the growth of the young cane-plant [1].

Here and there the hedge-rows were formed of the logwood, or *lignum campechense*, which makes an excellent fence, somewhat resembling the quick-set; and in other spots appeared a beautiful flowering shrub, to which is assigned the several names of *flower-fence*, *Barbadoes-pride*, *doodle-doo*, and *poinciana pulcherrima*. It is also called *cauda pavonis*, on account of its singular beauty: and an extremely pretty vine, the wild liquorice, was seen occasionally intermingling its scandent tendrils with the leaves of the nearest tree or plant, and opening its ripened pods, to enliven with their red beads the varied tints of nature's gay attire. They are called by the negroes, *jumbe-beads*, (jumbe, an evil spirit) and are the same seen sometimes in England, of an oviform shape, with black spots at

[1] A very different result attended the accidental introduction of the *Guinea-grass* into Jamaica in 1744. The seed of it came as food for some birds sent from Africa as a present to the chief justice, but the birds dying it was thrown away. The eagerness of the cattle to eat the grass which sprang from it suggested the idea of cultivating it, which has been continued with great advantage to the planters, who appropriate large quantities of land to its growth, which had hitherto been too sterile to be productive.

one end, worn as necklaces by children: numerous lizards too, of various colours and shades, were seen now and then crossing the paths, or rustling among the fallen leaves.

At the distance of about five miles from Basseterre, we came to a spot of romantic beauty called *Cayon*, where the mountain waters were meandering through a deep and rocky ravine towards the sea, and where stood in the eddying currents about a dozen negresses, with their petticoats raised to the height of their knees, and their busts disencumbered of the upper part of their dress. They were in the act of washing linen, by a method assimilated to that of taking out stains with a pair of scissars, totally unscrupulous about causing a few holes, or the divesture of buttons and strings. They belaboured the garments most unmercifully with a piece of wood, as they lay on the huge stones, as if intent upon taking revenge upon the owners for an unpaid bill. Among the minor miseries of human life, we may certainly include that of dressing in a hurry—a misery in itself—and discovering that you lack either strings or buttons, or both, wherewith to accommodate your habili-

ments to your proportions. It is a misery peculiar to travellers, and as likely to disturb the equanimity of one's temper as that experienced by the man who sent to China for a few dozen pair of silk stockings, at a time when they were not wrought to that perfection which they have since attained in this country, and upon receiving them after eighteen months' expectancy, discovering that every one had an immense darn at the heel, and a jacob's ladder in the leg, in exact imitation of the one he had sent as a *pattern* merely for the size.

The stream at Cayon is at all times fordable, and although it has been honoured with the name of *river*, it is seldom that a body of water passes over the rocky bottom of the ravine sufficient to warrant the designation.

At the opposite side of the ravine there is a settlement of the Moravian Missionaries, and the parish church of Saint Mary. The ascent of the road in this direction, and for the distance of half a mile onward, presents a succession of objects such as the imagination would embody in a scene of the true Indian character, destitute of every feature that could suggest the idea of a state of slavery,

and abounding in details that bespeak the ease and contentment of a primitive state of existence.

The village of Cayon consists only of a few detached wooden buildings, chiefly inhabited by coloured people, and serves merely to represent a grade of superiority over the more humble habitations of the negroes belonging to a neighbouring estate, which range for nearly half a mile on each side of the road, densely shaded by tall cocos, and various indigenous trees and plants, admitting only at intervals those beautiful touches of light which serve to infuse life and spirit into the picture.

There was no appearance of studied formality in the arrangement of the houses, except a propor-

tionate distance of about fifteen or twenty feet between them, and an equality in the line of those which faced the road, which were seen in perspective as far as the eye could reach. A few simple fences, composed of the logwood, the French physic-nut, and the castor-oil plant, here and there marked the superior taste of some of the occupants, and a small shed was attached to several of the dwellings to answer the purpose of a kitchen, and the pig-stye was too unequivocally defined, to admit of any doubt of its intention, although several of those animals were ranging about within the bounds prescribed to them by a long line fastened to one leg; and a number of Guinea-birds, and the common fowls were heard and seen in the vicinity.

Our attention was particularly directed to an old negress who sat at the door of one of the nearest habitations, with two or three naked children just able to run about, and an open wicker-basket, which contained a matronly hen, with a numerous brood, whose diminutive size admitted of their passing to and fro through the bars of the basket. "How you do, Massa?" she exclaimed, as we were about passing her. "How d'ye do, how d'ye do?" we

replied. "Massa, aw werry so so—dis yaw time no tan lek biffo, dat time me ñoŭng, me work for me massa—me now ole no can work." "Well, well," we stopped to parley with the beldam—"but you're very happy, you have a house, and children, and a pig, and fowls, and"——

"Hey! Me, Massa—him no 'blong me—*es kraub tan naw he hole ee nebber fat*[1], him 'blong Quasheba."

Having dismounted, and pulled from within the hut a wooden form which stood near the door, we sat down by the side of her, to enjoy the cool and placid scene before us. A few green coco-nuts were lying hard by, and having taken up one of them, the old negress anticipated our thirst, and exclaimed, "Massa, Cudjoe he *mash 'em*[2]." Cudjoe was at hand, a white-headed negro, who had at that moment walked across the road from the opposite houses, and he soon cut away with an old bill-hook, one end of the fibrous coating which

[1] "If a crab does not leave its hole it never gets fat." This is one of the numerous proverbs of the negroes, implying that if we do not move about to promote our interest we cannot get rich.

[2] To *mash*, i. e. to *break*, a word commonly used by the negroes in this sense.

enveloped the shell, and forcing a hole through it, presented to us the refreshing draught it contained. The coco-nut, in this unripe state, contains only a thin coating of the nut, which has not yet assumed the firm texture it exhibits when ripe, but merely a transparent mucilage, whence it has acquired the name of the "jelly coco-nut." It contains a greater quantity of liquor than when ripe, and it is commonly carried in this state to market by the negroes, and sold to alleviate thirst[1].

[1] The coco, or coco-nut tree, is frequently confounded with the tree that produces the beans of which chocolate is made. The former is of the palm tribe, and although common in almost every region of the tropics, it is said to be a native of oriental India. It thrives best near the sea, and is sometimes seen rising as from the ocean, as if designed by nature to give intimation of a sand bank scarce perceptible above the surface. Its tall stem, which attains a height of 60 and 70 feet, is spongy, and of little use, and the tough stringy filaments which form the outer coating of the nut are too coarse to serve as apparel. A species of arrack is extracted from the tree in the East Indies, and a drink called "Mobby" in the West Indies, as well as an excellent oil from the nut; and the nut itself is a palatable sort of thing, especially if associated with guava jelly; but all its virtues together, by no means merit the encomiums which many authors have assigned to them. "Ex quibus, panem, mel, vinum, acetum et vestitum conficiunt," say Herodotus and Pliny. The *cocao* tree is a native of South America, and the pods from which the beans that are made into chocolate are extracted, resemble a large cucumber. The tree is seldom more than 15 or 20 feet in height, and covets a moist, rich, and shaded soil.

The old negress was an African, and the little ebony-limbed urchins she had charge of, were the children of her daughter *Quasheba*, who was absent at her work.

"Gad bless you, me Massa," exclaimed the old dame as we rose to depart, placing a piece of money in her hand, "Gad bless you, aw nebber see you 'gin, me Massa."

"And why not?" we demanded.

"Massa, aw soon die—aw bin wary so, tay aw chaun wary no mo—me haut daw bong me, aw no good fu notin—notin 'tall, aw die, so aw no trubble nobuddy, no chat, no dog; ebin da grown lissad chaun say aw trubble he,"—our thoughts took a melancholy turn as we gazed upon her.

"Cheep good haut," responded old Cudjoe, "da kow no hab no tail, Gor-a-mity brush fry—you no bin see daw passon turraw day, dat time so ee bin daw reed book fu you, you no bin see um tan open ee yie pun you, an terry you, you nebber die?"

"True, true," we exclaimed, "thou shalt not die!" the spirit of our uncle Toby stirred within us as we uttered the predication; "and when thy immortal spirit no longer holds communion with this

life, thy lineaments shall live in our Sketch-book. Look you here!"—

The eyes of the old dame glistened, and a look of inward satisfaction beamed on her face as we held the portraiture before her, and Cudjoe was frantic with delight as he vociferated, "*me Gad! aw nebber see de like*[1]."

[1] Frequent intercourse with the negroes is required before you clearly understand their Anglo-patois dialect, particularly that of the Africans, owing chiefly to the number of odd expletives they employ; and it is probable some of our readers may require a literal *translation* of the above dialogue.

"Massa, I shall soon die," said the old negress, "I am so weary, that I can't be more weary; my heart does bang me; I am good for nothing, nothing at all—I shall die, so I no trouble nobody, no cat, no dog, even the ground lizard sha'n't say I trouble it."

Cudjoe.

Their benedictions followed us as we proceeded on our route, and we soon emerged from the shade of the tall cocos into the dazzling glare of the noon-day sun.

In the name of humanity, ye planters of Saint Kitts, we would urge you to keep your carts in better order; your cattle ask it of you in requital for their labour, and they would repay you tenfold by lengthened service! In our route we had met several carts heavily laden with hogsheads of sugar, and drawn by three and four yoke of oxen, whose united efforts effected only a sluggish movement of the vehicle over a deep sandy road, the negro drivers hooting and goading the animals onward with the whip, whose repeated smacks reverberated in the

Cudjoe. "Keep a good heart; if a cow has no tail, God Almighty brushes the flies," a negro proverb, intended to inculcate a reliance upon the Deity, for a manifestation of his goodness and protection in their necessities. "You no been see the parson the other day, that time he been read the book for you, you no been see him stand open his eye upon you, and tell you, you shall never die?" Another of their sayings bespeaks their conviction of the omnipresence of the Deity: "*Gor-a-mity nebber shet he yie,*" God Almighty never shuts his eye. They say God never sleeps, but keeps constant watch, and is a great enemy to those that "*do ugly,*" i. e. commit bad actions; whence also another saying, "*Gor-a-mity no lub ugry,*" which is a reproach often made by one negro to another.

upland defiles; and obedience to the lash was further enforced by certain admonitory exclamations directed to each animal in turn, whose names were repeated to give force to the requisition. "Hou! hou! *you*, *Friday*, work your debbil,—*Tom-boy—Goodluck!*"—even the carts complained of hard service, by creaking most inharmoniously under the load which threatened to break down as the worn out boxes of the wheels, yielding to the inequalities of the road, gave a rocking motion to the whole fabric. Ye Kittaphonian Senators! is there not one among you imbued with the feelings of "Galway Martin," in the cause of suffering quadrupeds? Ye planters, cannot the surety of gain teach you better things?

By all that's interesting and amusing, here's Captain Dove!—He is seated on a hired Rosinante that knows every road in the island, and requires only an occasional jerk of the bridle to keep him from stumbling; and peradventure that jerk failed of effect, we should witness an anti-climax in horsemanship, which would infallibly transport the rider a few yards at least in advance of his journey. He sits in the saddle like a distended pair of compasses

poised on a pivot, his short stiff sea-legs at right angles, and his squared elbows flapping like the pinions of an unfledged bird.

As he pulled up to salute us, his chubby round face beamed intelligent good humour upon us, and his heart swelled with benevolent intent as he invited us on board the Venus, after divers gratulatory expressions on our arrival. He was travelling round and about the island to "pick up sugars," as he expressed himself, that is to say, to prevail upon the planters to make their shipments in his vessel; and, he added, "I've been pretty successful, for they know,—stand still, can't you?" addressing the horse, "I could have unmoored my little ship with two whole cables ahead and a foul hawse, in half the time I was getting this animal under weigh at starting; but I no sooner turned his head homeward than he was under studding sails, and ready to sail without a clearance;—they know that no ship ever came out of dock with such a bottom as the Venus, or one that makes quicker voyages, and takes home a cleaner cargo." We dialogued for a few minutes with the worthy Schipper, and then proceeded in our route.

The consecutive events which follow in rapid succession within our own limited sphere of action, too frequently divert our attention from the progress which time is making; and days, months, and years pass on almost imperceptibly, until some event in which we have no direct interest, reminds us of the astounding fact. Within the tropics, where the uniformity of the seasons, and of the ordinary occurrences of life, carry us down the course of time upon a surface less ruffled than on the wider streams of enterprise, this truism comes oftener home to our bosoms. Captain Dove had twice crossed the Atlantic since we took leave of the Venus, and John Triptolemus Ghumbs had married Amelia Denton.

About a mile from Cayon, you come to "the Lodge" estate, whose works and the dwelling of its owner stand to the left of the road. You turn in at a neat entrance—neat it was then—formed by walls rounded at the approach on either side; and immediately to the right stands a substantial stone building, whose outward lineaments inform you that opulence had a share in the design, and that penury interposed in its completion. Adjoining it

on one side is a wooden wing, representing in its irregular form and decayed materials, the withered limb of a body once healthy, that is now contracting the disease of dilapidation which has afflicted its appended member; a flight of stone steps leads to a spacious hall which occupies the whole area of the principal building, and"——

"Thou ill-conceived caricature of humanity—thou base-wrought link in the chain of creation—thou epitome of speechless eloquence, wouldst oppose our approach?" A young semi-devil, in the shape of a monkey, confined within bounds by a string, grinned a vocabulary of imprecations upon us for our intrusion, performing at the same time as many antics as might satisfy a full gallery at Astley's for six nights in the week. Its master's approach, and the cordial reception we received from him, immediately reconciled the animal to our company; but he thought proper to take minute inspection of our person, and to handle the legs of our trousers, first examining the seams, then looking under them, as if to ascertain whether they were foreign manufacture, or whether they concealed ought that might be deemed contraband. These

animals would make efficient custom-house officers, if they could be persuaded to undertake the duties.

The hall was delightfully cool, and our parched palate, which yearned for something wherewith to allay its craving, was prodigiously gratified with some exquisite cold punch from a capacious bowl which stood on a sideboard. It had been mixed with the most felicitous accordance, but a peculiar goût was imparted to it by the juice of the *Acajou*-apple [1].

The days of pig-tails, queues, Herculean clubs,

[1] The tree which produces this fruit, as well as the nut which is corruptly called *Cashew* by the English, is of no great height, but its branches spread considerably, and when in blossom a delicious odour is diffused from it. The flowers, which grow in small bunches, are in the first instance white, but they afterwards assume a purple tinge, and fall off as the nut begins to appear. As the nut increases in size the apple may be said to takes its place on the stalk, whilst the nut adheres to the lower extremity of the apple, in the form of an ear, or a kidney bean of a deep green colour at first, assuming that of a pale olive as it ripens. The nut itself is too well known in England to merit further description. The caustic oil which comes from it is sometimes used by the West Indian ladies as a cosmetic to remove freckles and sun burning, and the Indians were wont to use it burnt to mollify their corns, as well as the whole nut to chronicle their age. The tree bearing only annually, they put by one every year, carefully preserving them in a little basket which they kept for that purpose.

and optic curls, have departed some forty or fifty years: calves' heads were then dressed in less time than the human correlative could be served up to the taste which Fashion prescribed; and it was deemed no less profanation of her edicts in the colonies, to fail placing a bowl of punch on the sideboard of a West Indian hall, at eleven o'clock A.M., than for her votaries to walk abroad without *one* of those passports to consideration; and in the present day, they continue to define, as well by their number as their length, distinctive qualifications to gentlemen of the "celestial empire." The fickle goddess has since imposed other and manifold observances, which have by degrees effected a total metamorphosis of the beau of the last century; but some few individuals—and we found them in the Antilles—prone to venerate the fragments of departed customs, have so far thrown off their allegiance, as to persist in wearing their tails, as if to notify to the observer that they passed the zenith of their lives in the days of Ranelagh and the Pantheon, and that every remaining hair on their heads serves as a conduit-pipe for memory to catch the whisperings of their departed pleasures. Punch too—not that humorous

hump-backed urchin, whose very look is a commentary upon fun, and who so happily, in despite of fashion, maintains his pristine garb as well as his station in society—but that admirable, and no less palatable compound of contrarieties which bears his name, appeared at "the Lodge" as a memento of its former popularity. Doctor Pinkard tells us, that when he sojourned at Barbadoes, the senators of that island drank punch at their debates, and that he witnessed the entrance of two persons bearing before them a large bowl of that mixture, and a two-quart glass filled with sangaree, which were first presented to the speaker, and afterwards to the different members, and even the auditory were permitted to partake of this part of the debate. There can be no doubt, however, that punch is an unwholesome beverage, and is apt to produce crapulence. We recommend bottled porter to support the system under exercise: in its native atmosphere it is crude and heavy, like the people, but it hath a fine creamy mellowness imparted to it by a tropical climate, rather enhancing than deteriorating its alimentary quality. The digestion seems to crave for it in behalf of the enervated system, and it is no

sooner imbibed, than it yields an invigorating glow through the frame, which places you firmer in the stirrups: indolence or inactivity should be satisfied with coco-nut water, which is cool and refreshing, and even nutritious; or a small quantity of good rum, diluted in about six times the portion of water, assuages thirst as well as any thing. The planters of St. Kitt's have given this mixture the name of swizzle, and sometimes use a stick which has at the end of it three or four short lateral branches to answer the purpose of a chocolate stirrer, with which they produce a froth. Let every man judge for himself in these matters, it is preposterous for him to be guided too rigidly by the recommendations of others, whose constitutions and habits may be totally different from his own. In the West Indies, stimulants are absolutely necessary to counteract the enervating influence of the climate upon his system—let him use them with discretion. The most fatal endemics of the country have now pretty well died a natural death, they were nurtured in swamps and uncleared land; and as for night air, and strokes of the sun, common sense prescribes the best antidote. By all means

wear flannel and calico, and keep the pores open.

In the days to which the doctor alludes, the usual dinner hours were two and three o'clock in the afternoon, and the House of Assembly met afterwards; in these days most people dine after sunset. Fashion delights in antitheses.

Speaking of dinner reminds us that we here, for the first time, tasted the land crab served up in its own shell, something after the manner of scalloped oysters, only vastly superior in flavour. They are considered the most delicate when they are moulting, but as they are foul feeders, they require purifying, and are usually kept some weeks in a crab-house for that purpose, and fed upon Indian corn or meal. This precaution is rendered further expedient to avoid cholera morbus, which some say they have occasioned those who have eaten of them, owing to their feeding on the mahoe-berry. Du Tertre relates a circumstance, from which we may judge that these animals abounded in the island when it was first settled by Europeans, and that like the Carib Indians, who held them in high esteem, they indulged in *anthropophaginian* appetency. Of

120 men who arrived from France in 1628, thirty were too unwell to move when they were landed, and having been left on the beach "very inconsiderately," adds the writer, they were devoured by the land crabs, which came down from the mountains in such numbers that they were in high heaps over the carcases, and did not leave the smallest morsel of flesh upon any of the bones. They are now by no means numerous, but in some parts of the West Indies, and in Jamaica particularly, they are at times seen in such multitudes that you cannot travel without treading upon them, and the negroes feed upon them with peculiar relish.

In their progress from the mountains to the sea coast at the particular season when they deposit their eggs, their march is regulated by a whimsical regard to good order and apparent discipline; nothing diverts them from pursuing a straight line, and whatever obstacles they meet with, whether a house, or a mountain, or a rock, they attempt to go over it, levying contributions in their way upon such supplies as they may need, and if they cannot walk over your dwelling, they will walk through it, if your doors be open to receive them. Twice in

the day they halt during the greatest heat, both to feed and to rest themselves, making their longest journeys in the night, until they arrive at the coast. Here they allow the undulating waters to wash them three or four times, and after waiting awhile in the neighbourhood to overcome their weariness, the females again repair to the beach, where they deposit their eggs in the sea, and the whole army afterwards resumes its march by the same route to the mountains. They soon after cast their shells, retiring under ground, and in this state they become very fat, and are supposed to be free from any poisonous quality. The young ones after being hatched in the sand, follow their progenitors to the mountains as soon as they are strong enough to undertake the journey.

Notwithstanding the manifold advantages which these fertile regions present to botanical research, we nowhere beheld a disposition to indulge in it until we came to the Lodge. A small parterre at the back of the dwelling was in admirable order, and contained many valuable shrubs and plants, among which we saw the sago plant, the white and red plumeria, the milk from whose branches is

said to be a sovereign remedy for the tooth-ache; the robina, or false acacia, the hibiscus able-moschus, or Syrian mallow, the guilandina moringa, whose root, when scraped, affords a tolerable substitute for horseradish; the crotallaria or rattlewort, and a variety of indigenous roots, all in vigorous growth, and attired in Flora's summer livery; and the working of a *jet d'eau* in a circular reservoir of water, with gold and silver fish seen gliding beneath its rippling surface, imparted a refreshing coolness over the spot.

We witnessed a singular antipathy on the part of *Jacco* the monkey to the softer sex of the human species, and he was prodigiously wrath if a negress came to the door, as it was common for the slaves to do, to ask a favor or make a complaint, and by way of experiment upon his sagacity, a gentleman dressed himself in female attire, and ascended the steps. Jacco grinned with indignation for a moment, rather, as it appeared, on account of the imposition practiced upon him, for he unequivocally asserted his power of discrimination by certain antics which he reserved expressly for his male acquaintance, as well as by gestures in handling the garments, which were not strictly consistent with decorum.

These animals are reputed delicate food, and the negroes eat them whenever they can catch them. They are very numerous in the mountainous districts of the island, where they burrow like rabbits, venturing only at night on the confines of the lowlands, and committing serious ravages upon the sugar canes, of which they are extremely fond. Notwithstanding watchmen are placed expressly to keep them off, they prove themselves able tactitians in carrying on their warfare with impunity, and the negro seldom gets a shot at them, or succeeds in the attempt to entrap them. They were brought here by the French, when they possessed one half the island conjointly with the English at its first settlement.

We spent several days at the lodge to our entire gratification, and our visits became frequent upon taking up a more permanent residence on an estate within a short ride from it.

There is, perhaps, no object in the creation more deeply interesting, or which claims a larger share of our commiseration and sympathy, than a virtuous man struggling *down* the hill of life, over a rugged road, after having enjoyed the brightest prospects

which its ascent could afford his sanguine expectations. Our hospitable host was precisely in this situation, a man who, if not consistently with the nice distinctions of moral rectitude, *vivum omnis virtutis exemplar*—was, nevertheless, deeply imbued with the best feelings of our nature, and possessed of a mind which education and experience had matured. Like many others, he had unfortunately become bewildered in the mazy labyrinths which crown its summit, and in his descent, discovered too late that he had mistaken the path he should have pursued; he could look back with regret, but he could not retrace his steps, and the rugged road he was traversing, presented nothing beyond but a dismal swamp on this side of eternity, made more gloomy and disheartening, by the faint and indefinite gleams of light which the *magic*-lanthorn of hope occasionally cast upon his route. Although he had long continued in the personal control of his estates, and consequently had avoided the immediate evils incidental to absenteeism, from which so many proprietors had suffered, his residence on the spot had been dictated by choice rather than by prudence or necessity, and improvident expenditure had over-

balanced the benefits arising from it. He was now only nominally the owner of the property, with this indubitable truth before him, that

> " Care, like a housekeeper, brings every week
> His bills in, and however we may storm,
> They must be paid: though six days smoothly run,
> The seventh will bring blue devils or a dun."

We felt more deeply interested in the fate of this individual, from the evident exercise, in every act we witnessed, of benevolent and humane feelings towards those whom a state of slavery had made dependent upon him. They looked upon him as a father and a protector, not with the distrust and artifice which such a state might be supposed to engender, but with an open frankness in their demeanour, and apparent veneration for his person, which at once bespoke confidence in the principles which governed him. He looked minutely into every thing that concerned their comfort and welfare, and good humour and cheerfulness met him at every turn: freedom, in the abstract sense,

> " —— shone but little in their heedless eyes,
> The good we never miss, we seldom prize."

But he was doomed soon to part from them;

accumulated difficulties wrested his property from him, and he retired to a quiet retreat in another quarter of the island. We believe he is still living, and we are happy in paying this poor, but sincere tribute to his acknowledged worth.

CHAPTER XIX.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS — MARTIAL LAW — COSTUME OF THE NEGROES—CHEGOES—AN APPRAISEMENT—A NEGRO'S SOLILOQUY—DEPREDATIONS OF MONKEYS AND RATS—NAMES OF NEGROES—THE DOCTOR AND THE PATIENT—IMPROVEMENT OF THE SLAVE POPULATION.

"In a strange land,
Such things, however trivial, reach the heart,
And through the heart the head, clearing away
The narrow notions that grew up at home."

ROGERS.

PLEASURE is a word of large acceptation. The enjoyments as well as the misfortunes of men bear a fluctuating and relative value, that is only to be computed from their different degrees of susceptibility, the peculiar bent of their dispositions and habits, and the particular circumstances of their situation. Who dares dispute the felicity coveted by the plough-boy, of swinging all day on a gate and eating fat pork? *Sua cuique voluptas.* Some there are, it has been supposed, who from a peculiar physical organization, from a perpetual

derangement of the system, or habitual fretfulness, restlessness, and impatience, are without the power of enjoyment. Rather, we imagine, because the source of their pleasures, often in their distemper —we have met with many such—is different from our own. Others, whose organs, by which pleasure is perceptible, have been so blunted and benumbed by accumulated suffering, as to be insensible to the objects which are capable of affording them gratification and delight. Among this class, we imagine, many people in England would include the negro population in our West Indian colonies, who, if permitted to claim occasional relaxation from the soul-depressing task-work of a servile bondage, and to manifest the ebullitions of gratification, their sense of pleasure bears only a relative value to the train of misery which marks the general tenor of their lives:—if they have their holydays at Christmas, it is with a consciousness which mars the purposes of the boon, which represses every incentive to mirth—that in a few days the work of torture will be resumed. Such might have been our reasoning before we visited these sunny isles—but such is not the case. And if we can

estimate the happiness of a people by the quantum of mirth and jollity prevailing among them, certainly our senses of hearing and seeing clearly demonstrated its existence among the slaves we had as yet seen, to a much greater extent than we could have imagined possible to be associated with a state of bondage.

Christmas is as much a season of festivity among them, as it may be with the veriest holyday rake in Christendom, and if a super-proportion of roast beef and plum-pudding, so essential to the enjoyment of their phlegmatic brethren in the parent state, does not gladden their hearts till repletion obscures their understanding, they have other viands provided for them, perhaps better suited to their tastes; and their mirth is not marred by the ill-timed connection of *quarter-day* with the anniversary. An ox, or, as the planters usually term that description of animal, "a cattle," is on some estates killed and divided amongst them, or Irish mess pork, with an extra allowance of yams, and flour or corn-meal, and a measure of rum, the children receiving a proportionate quantity; and by whatever means they have acquired a knowledge of the privileges which

the saturnalia conferred upon the Roman slaves, or whether it be from the deduction of reason that they imagine themselves entitled to them, they do not fail to practise as much impudent vivacity in "paying their respects" to their masters, as marked the conduct of the Roman bondmen in doing honour to the Pagan deity. For three days, all business or control over them, and all distinctions of rank cease, so far, at least, that they do what they please, within the bounds of justifiable liberty and hilarity. On the Christmas morning, most of them pay their respects at "the Buff," or great house, and deal out their benedictions and compliments with unrestrained volubility, and the serving of the donation is the exordium of the mirth and merriment which follow. Young and old participate in a reckless spirit of enjoyment, and a marvellous effect is also produced upon the sick, inasmuch as the hospital is generally clearer of patients than at any other time, whatever it may be when the holidays have terminated.

It forms no part of our purpose to combat opinions by anticipation—opinions such as these statements are calculated to elicit from many well

disposed persons, who would work reformation by theoretical reasoning; but we are not less prepared to hear, that in the indulgencies alluded to, is no where to be traced an alleviation of the sorrows they would naturally associate with a state of bondage. Be it so: the sketch is no less faithful, because it embodies objects which are not totally divested of natural deformities.

At an early period after the colonization of these islands, it became necessary to adopt precautionary measures against a spirit of rebellion on the part of the negroes, which has too frequently been manifested at this particular season, whence it has been deemed expedient to put martial law in force during the holidays [1]. The militia, if not immediately under arms, is kept in a state of preparation to act, should occasion call for it; and although the elements of the slave population are not of that discordant and uncivilized character which they presented during the prevalence of the

[1] It is worthy of remark that most of the insurrectionary movements on the part of the negroes in these islands have taken place, or been meditated to take place, about Christmas. The first instance of revolt occurred on the estate of Don Diego Columbus, in Hispaniola, on the 27th Dec. 1522.

slave traffic, and the constant introduction of Africans, other incentives to rebellion have been too powerfully exercised, as recent events have shown, to justify the continuance of the practice.

It is only on Sundays and other holidays, that any remarkable difference is perceptible in the attire of the negroes, their working dress, with few exceptions, being composed of the Osnaburg and blue cloth served to them by the proprietor, which they themselves make into shirts and trousers, and petticoats; the exceptions we have alluded to, consisting of such materials as they may have obtained by barter or purchase, and which, in the first instance, probably composed a portion of their holiday garments. Stockings they are seldom seen with, being an article, in the use of which they meet with insuperable obstacles, even if ambitious to wear them. The climate in some measure renders them superfluous, and the feet of the negroes necessarily become large, pigeon-heeled, and otherwise ill-shaped, from being generally unshod and exposed to the sun, and the frequent intrusion of a small insect called a chegoe, which penetrates the skin and forms its nest in the flesh,

causes a tenderness, and in some instances lameness, from neglect, to a degree which for a time incapacitates the individual for active labour. In such cases, however, the African negro is almost invariably pointed out, indolence and uncleanliness favouring in an eminent degree the luxurious appetites of these little free-booters[1]. At all times, indeed, from the causes we have named, the awkward gait of a negro in shoes may be compared to that of a cat walking in walnut-shells, and we have often seen them on the highways on a holiday, carrying their shoes in their hands, in order to appear in them in making their purposed visit. On such occasions they are attired in their best apparel, and the providence of their habits, and the

[1] A stranger would take the chegoe for a very small flea. It attacks different parts of the body, but chiefly the feet about the toes, where it soon perforates the skin and buries itself, causing an itching sensation by no means unpleasant. A discoloration of a bluish appearance, about the size of a pea, appears in about twenty-four hours, according to the activity of the animal in forming its nest, in which it deposits several hundred eggs, which if allowed to be hatched, the young ones commence the same operation, causing at length a spreading ulcer, especially if near a tendon. Care is required in extracting the bag, lest it should break, and any of the eggs remain in the flesh, which are sure to generate. The operation is usually performed with a needle.

acquirement of a taste for the artificial comforts of life, are thus strikingly exemplified over their indolent and less civilized associates, who are to be found on every estate and in every island, but whose numbers are happily decreasing, as blind superstition, and vice, and sensuality, yield to the active impulses of religion and morality.

In referring to particular characteristics of the negroes, at the earliest period of our narrative, it would be difficult not to associate impressions which may have been made in our minds by any improvement in their condition at a subsequent date; whence, in some instances, we may appear to form positive deductions upon the state of the slave population generally, from the aspect of their condition and character in any particular colony. We are not, however, writing at the dictation of memory, nor reiterating the sentiments of others who may have witnessed similar scenes. Our sketches are no *party*-coloured designs to mislead the imagination by artificial effect, we exhibit them as they were "*taken on the spot*," and happily the time has gone by, when, in doing so, we might have been suspected as a partisan, when, in com-

mon with all who have attempted to refute the gross calumnies propagated to the prejudice of the colonists, we might have been accused of advocating slavery, in the attempt to describe the condition of slaves. Neither are we fastidious in our selections: we have expatiated freely, in order to detect the defects as well as the beauties of nature, and unlike a late eminent artist, we have not disdained to pourtray even an ordinary countenance, from the fear that our reputation might suffer by the exhibition of it [1].

It has been customary upon transferring the control of a West Indian estate into other hands, either incidental to an assignment upon lease or sale, and, in some instances, to a change of management alone, to ascertain the current value of the property by an appraisement of the negroes, the works, live and dead stock, and the crop on the ground; and for this purpose, three experienced planters are usually selected to make the valuation.

[1] It has been said that the late Sir Thomas Lawrence never liked to make a portrait of a plain or unseemly person, particularly a female, and that he has been known to excuse himself, when he has been applied to by persons who could not command sufficient beauty to do justice to his talents.

In the instance of a lease, such a valuation forms the basis of computation at the end of the term, of any depreciation of the property in the way of dilapidation, as well in the latter case, of any improvement which the change in the system of management may have occasioned. As respects the negroes, all of them are required to attend in front of the proprietor's residence, where they dispose themselves in groups with their children, as inclination may dictate, until their names are called from the muster-roll, when they appear before the appraisers. We witnessed such a scene, accompanied by that never-failing additament to their employment or pastime, a confusion of voices, within a few days after our departure from the Lodge. Talk they will in despite of all consequences—they appear to be wound up for it; you might as well expect a clock to keep time without ticking, as for a negro to be awake and keep his tongue quiet, and should he happen to be solus, he will gratify the propensity by soliloquizing, something in this way, interrogatively and respondentively:—

"Daw hog aw bin mek fat, daw ranger him

kirry he—he ugry granfarrar babboon—he hed tan lek dem ugry musmillen—nebber mine daw hum much he bin mek?—aw tay you, von foo quatter foo sissy bit an a haf—turrer foo quatter foo sissy bit an fower dog—put sissy bit an haf pun sissy bit an fower dog, ee no mek donner two bit and tre dog?—'t be sure, berry well. Turrer quatter foo sissy bit an a haf, long daw quatter he obeshay bin tek foo sissy bit law two dog—ee no mek donner two bit law two dog?—'t be sure, berry well—put daw donner two bit an a haf pun da donner two bit la two dog, he no mek two donner fower bit la fi dog?—'t be sure—him mek two donner fower bit la fi dog—daw hed him goo fu notin!" It appeared that master Sambo had his pig killed by the ranger, for committing manifest and unlawful depredations upon the sugar-canes, an article of diet held in high estimation by the species, and its head was forfeited to the executioner by way of perquisite. Sambo naturally placed the body to the best account, and we behold him soliloquizing over the result in these terms:—"The hog I been make fat the ranger kill him—an ugly grandfather babboon, his head stands like them

ugly musk-melons — never mind, how much he been make? I'll tell you—one four quarter for six bits and a half—'t other four quarter for six bits and four dogs—put six bits and a half upon six bits and four dogs, he no make a dollar two bits and three dogs?—to be sure, very well.—The other quarter for six bits and a half, along with the quarter the overseer been take for six bits and two dogs—he no make a dollar two bits and two dogs —to be sure—very well—put the dollar two bits and a half upon the dollar two bits and two dogs, he no make two dollars four bits and five dogs?—To be sure—he make two dollars four bits and five dogs: the head, its good for nothing [1]."

Really, the depredations committed upon the sugar-canes by pigs, and especially by those nocturnal foragers the monkeys and rats, occasion a prodigious loss to the planters, besides the waste incurred from the wantonness of the negroes in gratifying their palates with the luscious juice, which they are permitted to do to their heart's content; but they

[1] A bit is the twelfth part of a dollar, equal to about fourpence halfpenny sterling; a dog is a small copper coin, of which there are six to a bit.

do not scruple to cast away as many canes after sucking a joint or two, as would afford a treat to a host of school-boys for a twelvemonth, disdaining even the trouble to carry them to their hogs. We have heard the loss occasioned by these several causes, estimated at from fifteen to twenty hogsheads of sugar in every hundred. While one piece of canes is being cut the rats retreat to another and another, always finding shelter and a liberal diet from the canes coming to maturity in constant succession; subjected, however, to divers manifestations of an evil spirit presiding over their destinies, in the shape of poison, and traps, and wire-haired terriers. They abound to such an extent on many estates, that a negro, whose services in other matters are not very valuable, is employed solely in the capacity of rat-catcher. Some of the planters in the French colonies adopt another and more summary method of exterminating these vermin. In cutting a piece of canes, they invest it at all points, driving the animals to the centre as they proceed, until a small portion only is left for them to shelter in. Dogs are then brought to the attack, and a tooth and nail conflict

ensues, from which few of the besieged effect their escape [1].

Except in Trinidad, where monkeys abound, we believe no other of the Caribbee Islands are infested with them. And now for the appraisement :—

The three gentlemen nominated as appraisers, with the doctor, who was in the habit of attending the hospital department of the estate, were seated in the projecting entrance to the house, and the manager called the names of the negroes as their attendance was required. Many of them had no other than a gentilitious cognomination, such as *Quashey, Cudjoe, Quaw, Cumba, Quasheba;* some personated heathen deities, heroes, and philosophers, with the distinctive adjunct, *big* or *little*, when there were two of the same name, as "big Janus," or "little Eve:"—and, verily, had lock-jaw inevitably been consequent upon laughter, we must have brought the penalty upon ourselves, even had *Jupiter* been present in *propria persona*,

[1] Rats are not natives of America, but were brought by shipping from Europe. Durante, physician to Pope Sixtus Quintus, who wrote a Latin poem on the preservation of health, enumerates domestic rats among animals that may be eaten with safety:—those that feed on sugar canes must be infinitely superior.

instead of a short, squat, broad-shouldered, good-humoured looking compound of humanity, who appeared suddenly before us the instant the name was uttered by the manager, as if dropped from the clouds purposely to claim the title of the Pagan deity. He looked and grinned an infinite deal of self-satisfaction, and with an air of affected politeness in doffing his cap, seemed conscious of the dignity of the name, in the total absence of any personal endowments to support it [1].

There were several afflicted with elephantiasis, and yaws, and among the children were two or three who indulged in the singular propensity to dirt-eating, a disease which has acquired from the French the name of *mal d'estomac*. Mungo Park

[1] Such names as Quashee, meaning *Sunday*, Yeday, *Monday*, Cudjoe, *Tuesday*, and others signifying particular qualifications, accidents, or things, were more common when the mass of the slave population of these islands was composed of Africans, who retained their original names. Those of Mars, Achilles, Adonis, Pompey, Cæsar, Plato, Cicero, Marlborough, Penelope, Niobe, and others of the gods and goddesses, heroes and philosophers, as well as of particular places, as London, Paris, Bristol, Tower-hill, were also assigned to them, and their immediate offspring; but by degrees the ordinary Christian names became common, and by far the largest number were now so designated although the rite of baptism had as yet been sparingly practised among them.

mentions these several diseases as common among the Africans he met with in his travels, and they have long maintained an hereditary character among the slaves in the West Indies. The latter is a disease of relaxation accompanied by an empoverished state of blood, producing extreme depression of spirits, languor, and listlessness. Its destructive nature caused great mortality among the slaves upon their early settlement in these islands, and there is little doubt that the practices of *obeah*, in many instances, promoted its fatal consequences.

Their age, healthiness, and capacity, formed the basis of their valuation, and there was an evident desire, on the part of many of them, to put on the worst appearance, less, we apprehend, from any feeling of debasement that might attach to the proceeding, than from a speculative apprehension of the consequences which might follow, and as a prelude to a spirit of disorganization which has too frequently attended a change of management, justified, however, by the negroes themselves, as a mere practical joke to "try their new master." Some few in the background enjoyed the fun without the least reserve,

and in two or three instances, caused the dissembler to laugh outright at his own artful metamorphosis. We remember one female in particular, named Araminta, who approached in pitiable aspect, with a piece of blue peniston over her head, and with a querulous accent, before a question had been put to her, she exclaimed, "Massa, aw no good nigger, aw berry weak,"—a ludicrous expression of affected sullenness suddenly marked her countenance, as she at this moment exchanged looks with the doctor, whose presence seemed unexpected, but the twilight of risibility which was peering from one corner of her mouth, irresistibly betrayed a practical sagacity working in an under current. The doctor, in turn, framed a smile which seemed adapted to her comprehension, and the following dialogue ensued, as they mutually performed that instinctive movement, which seldom fails to mark the exordium of intercourse between a doctor and a patient.—"Well, Araminta, what's the matter now?"

"Massa, aw not a well—da belly da cut me—all ober —aw hab da feber."

"Indeed! give me your hand."

"Heh! him no good, massa—da pulse no peke true."

"Well, well, we'll try it—let me feel it—it's a very good pulse, and you're very cool—let me see your tongue."

"Massa, aw no c-o-o-l—da tung all de same, he no peke true, da tung, and da pulse him c-o-o-l—da buddy he hut—da belly da cut me, da hed he da bong me—but you no can see um, Massa."

"But you can open your mouth—let me look at it, and I'll tell you all about it."

Had Araminta been somewhat more refined in her manners, and less dependent in her situation, she would probably have said, "You're a very tiresome man, why don't you believe what I say?" all of which she uttered in that inharmonious monosyllable "*hĕh!*" a sharp quick sound produced in the throat, peculiar to negroes when expressing momentary vexation. Her under-jaw immediately relaxed, and a white *chalky* tongue protruded beyond it: the doctor touched it with his finger, and we thought of Thomson's Sophonisba, as he exclaimed, with a shake of the head and a tragical emphasis, "Oh! Araminta, Araminta, oh!" A

glass of water was forthwith administered as a febrifuge, which had a miraculous effect in removing the symptom in despite of the disease; and the patient, as she made her retreat, received the congratulations of her associates in bursts of laughter. She happened to be one of those people who are to be found in every grade in life, possessing an inherent and ungovernable disposition to idleness; ready to resort to any expedient, and submit to any privation short of starving, in order to indulge in it; and many are still to be found among the negroes on the plantations in the West Indies, notwithstanding the innate antipathy to labour, and the stubborn disposition of the African character, have gradually yielded to the dictates of better feelings on the part of their creole offspring, and to the necessity of active industry, to gratify a taste they are every day acquiring for the artificial comforts of life. The negro character had by this time become divested of many of its primitive features of barbarism. The traffic in slaves had long since ceased to be countenanced by the British legislature; and even the removal of slaves from one English colony to another, had been also

interdicted, unless its expediency was admitted, by an order in council from England. The Africans were fast dying off, and with them their superstitions and barbarous observances, and by far the largest number of the population was composed of *creoles*, who had no need, in sullen discontent, to mourn the loss of their distant homes, relatives, and friends, from whom they had been mercilessly severed; their perceptions, from their infancy, being adapted to the various objects which continued to surround them. In these simple facts might be recognized the extinction of the worst features of slavery in these colonies; coercion having become less a matter of necessity, as a disposition to industry had been engendered; but denying to the planters—that which has been too frequently done by the most sweeping asseverations, the feelings of humane and benevolent minds, self-interest alone had enforced a milder system of management, as a security against the mortality of their slaves, now no longer to be replaced.

CHAPTER XX.

EFFECTS OF INDIGESTION—SINGULAR PHENOMENA IN NATURAL MAGIC—CULTIVATION—DESCRIPTION OF THE SUGAR CANE—HARVEST—A CHORUS—HEAD-WORK—AN ANECDOTE—FALLEN FORTUNES—PITT AND SUGAR DUTIES—PALACES OF CHARLES V. — ESTRIDGES — CABBAGE PALMS — HUMMING BIRDS — THE LEVEL—LEEWARD COUNTRY—BRIMSTONE HILL.

" Oh! dura ilia messorum,"—" Oh!
Ye rigid guts of reapers!"—I translate
For the great benefit of those who know
What indigestion is—that inward fate
Which makes all Styx through one small liver flow.
A peasant's sweat is worth his lord's estate:
Let *this* one toil for bread, *that* rack for rent,
He who sleeps best, may be the most content.

Don Juan.

We had, undoubtedly, found the condition and general disposition of the negroes, in every respect, and in an eminent degree, at variance with the prevailing opinions entertained in this country. Still those vague and speculative notions which early impressions had engendered, and which the

school of fanaticism had fostered, were constantly recurring to us, as if to dispute our faith, and to write us down *ass* for allowing conviction to follow it.

The scene we had so recently witnessed was altogether novel and interesting, and it was as effectually pourtrayed on the sketch-book of the mind, as if a camera-obscura had reflected the exact proportions and general effect of all its details. It had, however, produced those feelings which commonly occur in contemplating a picture that embodies objects to which the eye is unaccustomed, and the mind is induced to travel out of the frame to find some analogy to reconcile you to the imposition. Here, however, the search was vain, it was nowhere to be found: the anomalies which marked the originality of the representation, were peculiar to a state of slavery; and the right of one man to set a market price upon the physical energies, the free will, and the body of his fellow-creatures, was a feature too revolting to be contemplated with complacency; and for some days we were constantly reverting to the exhibition, whilst the different faces and demeanour of the

several negroes who had passed before us, were irresistibly presented to our imagination.

Somewhat heated by exposure to the sun and hard riding during the day, and a liberal portion of old madeira in the evening, we retired to rest with the reasonable expectation of having sound repose. We were, however, prematurely disturbed by the musquito netting, which surrounded the bedstead, being cautiously drawn from under the mattrass, where it had been "tucked in," and from the stiffness it had acquired by being starched, it made a rustling noise, sufficient to disturb a restless sleeper. We felt a consciousness that we had made no other motion than that of opening our eyes, and we remained quiet to reflect upon the cause. The window shutters were closed, but they had holes cut in them to admit the light, and we could perceive the motion of something in the intermediate distance. An indescribable sensation of doubt and apprehension came over us, as we beheld the figure of a man in the act of raising the curtains to admit his head and shoulders within the folds; and the faint gleam of light which was admitted through the shutters, discovered to us the features

of a slave whose countenance and demeanour had particularly claimed our attention during the inspection of the gang. The curtain now lodged on the neck of our disturber, and his head approached nearer to us, as if to ascertain more correctly the precise situation in which we lay; and the strange conflict of feeling which nearly paralyzed every nerve may be imagined, as we beheld his muscular arm raised to plant a large knife or dagger in our breast. The necessity of immediate action, to defeat the ruffian's purpose, was manifest, and with a sudden and determined effort we succeeded in grasping his wrist, as we sprung from the bed. The clothes and curtains gave way before us, and the suddenness and impetuosity of the movement brought our antagonist to the middle of the room, with the arm which held the knife, firmly grasped in our right hand. We demanded of him to drop the weapon, but he heeded us not; we called for light and assistance, but no one came; and at length driven to desperation we rallied all our strength, and struggled to overcome him. The dressing table, washing stand, and chairs were upset in the scuffle; and after a desperate conflict

we both stood in a corner of the room in a state of breathless exhaustion, his wrist still firmly held within our grasp: a recognition of mutual determination passed between us, but the malicious grin and glaring eye-balls of our adversary, threw a momentary chill over us, and we felt incapable of calling for aid. Assistance was, however, at hand: the door of the chamber opened, and our servant inquired what was the matter. "Look at this villain!" we exclaimed. "Massa, me no see him," was the reply. "Open the shutters! You scoundrel, you shall not escape me"—the dawn of morning threw a gleam of light into the chamber—"now then, come forth," and we staggered to the middle of the room, still firmly grasping the wrist of our opponent. "Massa, me no see him," repeated the boy; a momentary sensation of wild confusion pervaded our intellects, and we retired in a state of exhaustion to the bed. It was,

> "A dagger of the mind; a false creation,
> Proceeding from the heat-oppress'd brain."

We had been perfectly awake from the moment we sprang from the bed; the phantom which our

imagination had embodied in our sleep, had gained so great a mastery over our waking perceptions, as to leave no room for doubt of its tangible existence, and the deception was increased by the accidental possession of our own arm, and the struggle we made to release it. The left wrist continued grasped by the right hand for some time after we had sat down, and when it was released, it exhibited an excoriated surface greatly inflamed. Fever afterwards invaded the whole system, and for several days we were confined to the house.

In his very interesting letters on natural magic, Dr. Brewster has shown, that spectral illusions are nothing more than recollected images of the mind, which in certain states of bodily indisposition, particularly indigestion, are often more vivid than the actual impressions produced by visible objects; and the most striking peculiarity they present to us, and which, perhaps, promotes the deception more than any other circumstance is, that they cover or conceal objects immediately behind them. These phenomena were strikingly exemplified in the instance we have related: the apparition was before us in all the apparent tangibility of reality, even after day-

light had been admitted into the room, and before we sprang from the bed and during the encounter, its form interposed between ourselves and the gleam of light which came through the holes in the shutters.

The beauty and fertility of the windward part of this island cannot fail to strike the most careless observer. The refreshing coolness of the sea-breezes constantly blowing on the coast, neutralize the calefactive influence of the sun upon the vegetative productions of nature, which become sublimated to a degree of wild luxuriance. Cultivation is carried to the very verge of the coast, whence the chequered fields take a gradual assent to the bases of precipitous mountains, which are richly clothed with verdant timber, the growth of ages, and presenting that perfect harmony of outline for which this island is so much distinguished; in some places protruding beyond the limits which nature appears to have prescribed in the general disposition, and in others, receding as if to compensate for the encroachment. The huge pinnacle of Mount Misery presents its sterile front at every point, sometimes seen towering above the light fleecy clouds which

float upon the subjacent hills, and at others, lowering through the misty exhalations which rise above its summit. Immediately below it is an immense crater, covered with dense brushwood and trees. The bottom of it presents a level surface of about fifty acres, of which seven are occupied by a lake, surrounded by trees of considerable growth, among which the mountain cabbage rears its majestic head. Many years have elapsed since the latest eruption, but smoke has been recently seen to issue from the fissures of the rocks, and lava, and pearl sulphur abound in the bottom.

The chequered appearance of the cane-fields, is occasioned by the mode of cultivation, common with trifling variation, to all the islands. The lands are planted interchangeably with canes and provisions, or left to rest fallow, which long and forced culture has rendered necessary, demanding also liberal assistance from manure. The canes come to maturity in constant and unvaried succession through the year; and those pieces in a state of the greatest forwardness are often disposed diagonally, in case of fire to prevent communication of the element beyond one piece; the diversity

of shades which the canes, and provisions, and fallow lands afford, contributes to produce the most vivid and pleasing combination of forms imaginable.

Mr. Beckford, in his descriptive account of Jamaica, with great justness observes, that a field of ripe canes, "is one of the most beautiful productions that the pen or pencil can possibly describe. It in common rises from three to eight feet in height; a difference in growth that very strongly marks the difference of soil or the varieties of culture. It is when ripe of a bright and golden yellow; and where obvious to the sun is in many parts very beautifully streaked with red; the top is of a darkish green, but the more dry it becomes, from either an excess of ripeness or a continuance of drought, of a russet yellow, with long and narrow leaves depending, from the centre of which shoots up an arrow-like and silver wand, from two to six feet in height, and from the summit of which grows out a plume of white feathers, which are delicately fringed with a lilac dye."

To assist the judgment in determining when the

canes are sufficiently ripe, after a growth of between eleven and twelve months, a portion of juice is sometimes expressed from a cane, (selected as a fair specimen of the whole piece,) and exposed to the sun for the aqueous parts to evaporate; if the crystallization be evident to the touch and retain firmness, the piece of canes may be considered fit for cutting; but to an experienced eye, the ripeness is otherwise obvious. The operation of cutting then commences, by the negroes arranging themselves with their bill-hooks as when hoeing, each taking his or her respective row. The upper part of the cane, comprising plant and top, is first cut off: the plant or top shoot, which is about twelve inches in length, and full of eyes, is separated, and the cane is then cut close to the earth. As the cutters proceed, they strip the trash or dried leaves from the canes, and collect them in swaths about twenty feet apart, that the junks of canes may be unincumbered in the intervals; whilst the inferior negroes are employed in binding the canes that have been cut, into bundles of twenty or thirty each, which they carry to the carts in attendance

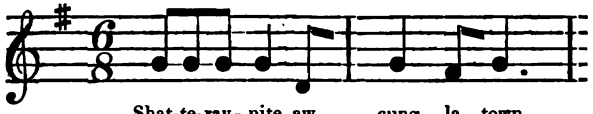
to convey to the mill; the trash is afterwards collected for fuel, and the green cane-tops as food for the cattle, in which they greatly delight.

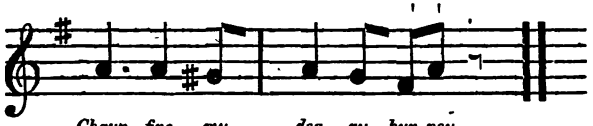
It would be difficult to convey an adequate idea of the very lively and imposing character of a West Indian harvest, combined with all the sublimity and loveliness of tropical scenery, and a tropical atmosphere: even slavery appears divested of its obnoxious and complicated character amidst the festivity and mirth which prevail; and such is the nourishing property of the sugar-cane, that the negroes, who consume great quantities of it, never appear so healthy and animated as at this particular season; it has a wonderful and immediate effect upon their whole system, frequently restoring the weak and sickly to the enjoyment of health and spirits.

The dwelling of the proprietor, or his attorney, is usually situated on an elevation to windward, in the vicinity of the works, to afford a commanding view over the estate, and to facilitate communication with the stores and hospital, as well as more immediate control over the labour carried on at the mill and boiling-house. From this point,

during the season of which we are speaking, is witnessed a scene of animation and cheerfulness, corresponding in character with that which is passing in the field; and we have often been constrained to listen to the light-hearted hilarity of the negroes, and to watch, with infinite satisfaction, the gambols of the rising generation, pelting each other with the macerated cane, which they are employed to strew in the sun to dry for fuel, after it has passed through the mill. The carts passing and repassing in conveying the bundles of canes from the field, the negroes transporting the canes to the mill, the mill vanes rustling in their revolution, and the confused clamour of voices in dialogue and song, present a singular contrast to that calm repose which nature seems to claim for herself in these clear and ardent climes, manifesting only at intervals her indignant wrath in hurricanes and earthquakes, as if impatient of the presence of man. Here is a song, or rather a *chorus*, which the negroes sing on such occasions, being a fair sample of their poetry and music; kept up, perhaps, by a few of them working together, whilst the others at the same time sing some popular English tune, re-

cently imported, forming together, something like that delectable compound of harmony and discord, a "Dutch Medley."





Aw run roun da lemon tree,
Chaun fine my deary hunney.

Aw look behine da guaba bush,
Chaun fine my deary hunney.

Aw wash my pot, aw wash um clean,
Chaun fine my deary hunney.

Aw put in pease, aw put in poke,
Chaun fine my deary hunney.

Aw boil my pot, aw boil um sweet,
Chaun fine my deary hunney.

Aw sweep my house, aw sweep um clean,
Chaun fine my deary hunney.

Aw clean my nife, aw clean um shine,
Chaun fine my deary hunney.

Aw mek my bed, aw mek um soff,
Chaun fine my deary hunney.

Aw mak um up, aw shek um up,
Chaun fine my deary hunney.

The bundles of canes being brought from the field, are loosened on the spot where they are deposited by the carts, as near to the mill as practicable, whence the negroes convey as many as they can carry on their heads to the persons employed in passing them through the rollers. If usage had prescribed the conveyance of a single cane at a time, the *head* would be the bearer of it. It is an African custom which has descended to the creole negroes, who practise it from their infancy; and whether in travelling to market with baskets of provisions, conveying a calabash of water from the spring, or baskets of manure to a cane-piece, thither the load is invariably consigned; and to this circumstance we may attribute their erect position and firmness of step in walking, especially among the women. A whimsical illustration of this habit occurred some years ago, we believe, in this island. A proprietor of an estate who had recently arrived from England, instigated by the benevolent purpose of relieving them of the labour and fatigue incidental to carrying heavy loads on their heads, procured for them a considerable number of wheel-barrows. They were all extremely pleased with the novelty

of the thing, but, unfortunately, the intention of their master was misunderstood and perverted, and his surprise and mortification may be imagined, when he beheld the wheel-barrows, as well as the loads they contained, consigned to the heads of his sable peasantry, who were spinning the wheel which they carried in front, to their own abundant satisfaction and delight: a practical sarcasm upon many a bigot to old prejudices, who would rather pursue through life the cart-horse routine of their earliest conceptions, than yield to the suggestions of experience, which they call innovation.

Eventus varios res nova semper habet.

Some of our agricultural friends in the tropics might take the hint.

Many estates exhibit lamentable signs of departed opulence in the ruins of buildings, once designed for the residence of their wealthy owners, too many of whom have fallen victims to their own improvidence, and brought beggary upon their offspring, whom they had taught to expect unrestricted wealth. In the larger island of Jamaica, where the habits of life among West Indian proprietors were on a wider scale of magnificent ex-

travagance, the ruins of splendid mansions speak more plainly the language of humiliation to their fallen pride [1]. Of about one hundred and twenty estates in cultivation in this island, we could scarcely venture to name five, whose (about thirty) proprietors were more than nominal owners, and were in the hands of one mercantile house.

On an estate called Estridge's, in the parish of Nicola Town, there is a magnificent avenue of cabbage palms, probably superior in arrangement, in luxuriance, and general effect, to any thing of the kind in the West Indies. They are planted equi-distant in two double rows, extending nearly a quarter of a mile, from the sugar-works of the estate, to the spot where its owner formerly resided, and where four of these living Corinthian columns rear their lofty capitals round the site of the build-

[1] During the time Pitt was in the plenitude of his power, and George III. frequently honoured Weymouth with his presence, some opulent Jamaica proprietor appeared there with the most splendid equipage, with out-riders, and livery that bespoke the rank of royalty. "Sugar, sugar, eh?—all *that* sugar!" said the King; "how are the duties, eh, Pitt, how are the duties?" Pitt took the hint.

The first question of his Majesty has been often applied to the magnificent palaces erected by Charles V. at Madrid, which were said to have been built of the sugar of Hispaniola.

ing. The works of this estate are of very superior construction. The boiling-house, curing-house, and distillery, are all commodiously arranged under one roof, and the external appearance of the building, with its steeple, clock, &c., conveys a magnificent idea of the importance of the establishment, compared with most of the works in the island. The windmill is also on a large scale; and the manager's house, the hospital for the sick negroes, the extensive stores, tradesmen's shops, stables, cattle-pens, &c., indicate, not less distinctly, the great profits of a West Indian estate in times gone by, and the immense capital necessarily embarked in it, than the ruins of the proprietor's dwelling, and the forlorn and desolated spot in the vicinity of them, "where once the garden smiled," exhibit the condition to which this description of property has now fallen.

As we rode up the avenue, and the sound of the negroes' voices gradually died away in the distance, a melancholy charm came over us, such as is experienced in contemplating those magnificent remains of antiquity which have excited the wonder and admiration of succeeding generations; and

involuntarily induced a sigh in honour of him who had planted the living pedestals, and a pious reverential sentiment of that Power which had reared and completed so splendid a monument to his memory, a monument surpassing in beauty the proudest cenotaph ever reared by the pigmy faculties of man, for, in its organic perfection, is manifested the omnipotence of the architect. A singular uniformity prevails in the height of the trees, and their dimensions and distance from each other; and seen in perspective within the avenue they represent collectively three long vaulted aisles with fluted sides: whilst the rustling of the verdant roof, the mellow shade which prevails beneath it, and the cool currents of air passing between the stems, diffuse a hallowing softness, and a spirit of calm repose about the spot, which irresistibly dispose the mind to meditation, presenting, at the same time, a singular contrast to the expanded vividness of the cultivated fields beyond it, glowing beneath the dazzling splendour of a tropical sun.

The parterre formerly attached to the dwelling as a garden, presented a promiscuous mixture of fruit trees, flowering shrubs, and weeds, the high grass

growing in the spaces which had once been designed for paths. The *shaddoc*, the *mango*, the *pawpaw*, and the *tamarind*, were teeming with refreshing fruits without the aid of culture; and the gay and delicate beauty of several choice flowering shrubs intermingled with the rank weeds and underwood, tacitly rebuked the ingratitude and indolence of man in withholding the simple means that would turn the wilderness to a garden.

The calm seclusion of the place and the numerous flowers had probably attracted several of those brilliant gems of animate nature, those winged rubies, and emeralds, and sapphires, which bear the name of humming birds. At one moment they darted past us in different directions, with almost imperceptible swiftness, and at the next were seen poising their tremulous wings on one spot, again darting off and lost to the sight, and as quickly reappearing: thus passing in rapid flight from flower to flower, as if to exhibit to the beholder the incomparable lustre of their plumage in contrast with the varied dyes of blossoming vegetation. One of these beautiful creatures sat on a nest within the distance of a yard from us, sufficiently close for us to per-

ceive the motion of palpitation which fear had probably excited. It had no need of apprehension, and instinct appeared to give it assurance of safety, for it did not quit its nest, but allowed us to approach still nearer to examine it. The nest was composed of cotton very artfully arranged, with a few dried leaves interwoven, and the whole fabric was secured by a short lateral branch which served as a foundation [1].

By the by, we visited "the *level*"—some incorrigible wag hath altered the substantive in our note book, by substituting a *d* for the *l*, and an *i* for the second *e*. It is a very remarkable spot in the midst of the mountains, somewhat more than half distance in the ascent to the tops of the principal range; presenting an extensive and beautiful plain of verdant grass, shut out from every thing that reminds you of the tropics; and the chilliness of the atmosphere carries off the imagination to the frigid zone

[1] The Spaniards call the humming-bird, the *picaflore*, on account of its hovering over flowers and sucking their juices, which they do without lacerating or even discomposing their petals. It appears to be an erroneous opinion that they live wholly on such food, but they rather resort to flowers for the small insects which are contained in them.

before you have been five minutes on the spot. The monkeys have sagaciously selected it as a general rendezvous, for this very obvious reason, that they may congregate in the centre of the plain without fear of surprise, having an uninterrupted view of the approach of an enemy, at a distance that affords them security in retreat. The negroes will have it that they possess the faculty of speech, but that they have a mortal aversion to digging cane holes, and therefore wisely conceal it from the knowledge of man, to avoid a requisition with which they have no disposition to comply.

We rode several times round the island during the ten or eleven months of our residence in it. On the opposite, or leeward side to that which we have more particularly described, the country is far less verdant, generally presenting one universal tinge of scorched yellow, from the ascendant powers of the sun's rays being unallayed by the refreshing influence of the prevailing trade-wind, which is intercepted by the central chain of mountains. A remarkable difference is consequently perceptible in the atmosphere, especially from three to five or six in the afternoon, by which time the reflected

heat from the sandy roads renders travelling almost insufferable. The scenery in other respects is no less picturesque and imposing; and, in approaching Basseterre from the north-western extremity of the island, where there is another town called Sandy Point, you meet with a constant succession of bold and beautiful scenery. The fortress of Brimstone-hill first claims attention, standing in an isolated position between the central chain and the road that fringes the coast, its highest point being 978 feet; the works are said to be of very superior construction; and there is a tank within the ramparts, capable of containing 90,000 gallons of water. Further in advance, you cross several steep and rugged ravines, on the sides of which the road converges until it attains a favourable position for a bridge; and as you proceed, the conical mountain of Nevis gradually opens in the distance, forming in appearance, by connexion with the narrow neck of land which terminates the island, the extremity of an extensive bay, at the bottom of which lies the town of Basseterre. No one can behold this beautiful scene without associating with it the several conflicts which, at different periods, have taken

place on the spot, to which reference is made in the historical sketch of the colony.

The beautiful district of Basseterre now claims your admiration. It comprises very many estates, forming an inclined plane of great extent, which assumes a level surface as it approaches the sea. In common with the whole country on this side of the island it suffers from repeated and excessive drought, to such an extent, that the whole crop from this district was, on one occasion, shipped in a long-boat.

CHAPTER XXI.

PARISHES—CHURCHES AND CHAPELS—MORAVIANS AND METHODISTS—MULATTO'S AND FREE NEGROES—A REMONSTRANCE—EVILS OF SMALL COMMUNITIES—LEGISLATION—CAUSES OF DISSENSION—ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE—REGISTRAR'S OFFICE—COURT-HOUSE—PAINTING AND SKETCHING—HISTORICAL SKETCH.

"Whether is't folly, pride, or knavery,
That makes this discontented land appear
Less happy now in times of peace than war:
That civil feuds disturb the country more,
Than all their bloody wars have done before."

DE FOE.

SAINT CHRISTOPHER'S is divided into nine parishes, each having a Protestant church, besides several Moravian and Wesleyan establishments in different parts of the island, and, at this time, they were generally well attended. The Moravians did not commence their mission in this island until 1775, and their first chapel was not completed until 1789, in which year eighty-six negroes were baptized, and

upwards of three hundred were candidates for baptism at the end of the year. These missionaries had made greater progress in several of the other colonies; the number of converted negroes under their care in 1787, amounting to 16,045. In 1794, the society of Wesleyans at Saint Kitt's was composed of 1554 members, and after this period they greatly increased. Religious toleration has at all times been conceded in this colony, and perhaps a more liberal policy than what has been practised in most of the neighbouring islands, has been extended to the coloured and free black population, to a degree indeed, which has been ill requited by the insolent demeanour too commonly characteristic of their conduct. The free blacks were, generally speaking, incorrigible vagabonds. Their habits of life make them so—and the slaves engaged on hire in similar avocations, such as boatmen and porters, were no less vicious. Emulating each other in the means to obtain a *bit* or quarter-dollar, and being prodigiously pugnacious as well as loquacious, the beach of Basseterre was constantly a scene of quarrelling and fighting, the belligerents never failing to introduce in their pugilistic conflicts, the practice of

butting, as often as opportunity offered. Many of these slaves, as well as others engaged in selling cakes and fruit about the town, and some as washers, are the property of coloured people, by whom is too commonly exercised the most intolerant and cruel authority, and especially by the women.

Gentlemen of Saint Kitt's, you have indeed endured great hardships—short crops, low prices and high duties, drought and knot-grass, monkeys, rats, and borers, [1] hurricanes and earthquakes, mortgages and foreclosures, the machinations of fanatics, and rebukes from Downing-street; enough in all conscience to sour your dispositions, to cause you to lament the wretchedness of this life, and to extend the name of the Mountain of Misery to the whole of the beautiful island you inhabit: but, in the name of humanity and common sense, why quarrel among yourselves? If you have played high in an hazardous enterprise, and staked your fortunes on *black* instead of red, why repress those

[1] "Society is now one polish'd horde,
Form'd of two mighty tribes, the Bores and Bored."
The *Borer* we allude to is an insect that commits serious ravages upon the sugar canes.

kindly feelings of your nature which should cause you to sympathize in the disappointment you have mutually sustained? Have you lost all taste for the poetry of life, which induces a deep and intense feeling of the happiness to be derived from mutual good-will, even if sacrifices—sacrifices of pride and envy be made for its maintenance; a feeling which establishes a beneficent example of the victory of the social over the selfish principle? Certain it is that you are not in communion: the essence of social order is allowed to effervesce and evaporate as soon as your dinner parties break up, and the alkali of envy, or some such passion, mingling with the acid of discontent, perhaps of your misfortunes—causes fermentation without subtilizing the repellent principle. Hence that spirit of detraction, that irrational abnegation of the leading principles of moral science, which clearly demonstrate the inward and outward necessity of mutual good-will—hence, too, those frequent petty squabbles, that continual antagonism which too commonly prevails among you: that abominable propensity of nicknaming people, which unmercifully distorts the hereditary patronymic of Mr. Postlethwait into *Puzzle-pate*, that of Mr.

Peter Grimes into *Peter Grievous*, of Mr. William Phipps into *Billy Pipes*, of Mr. Hawthorn into *Hartshorn*, and which confers the distinguishing and distinguished title of "a washerwoman" upon a lover of tea. All of which we make bold to pronounce, is a reproach upon the intelligence and superior intellects with which many of you are endowed. Envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness, are unfortunately the curse of most small communities: their component parts are necessarily in oppugnancy, from the absence of those intermediate and connecting links, which, in larger bodies, cause the relative grades and distinctions of rank to glide into each other without perceptible friction, or without causing that sensible vibration, which, on the most frivolous occasions, runs to the extremities, and disturbs the whole social chain of a more circumscribed sphere of action. In the West Indies, the elements of society are more complex, than those which commonly form the communities of country towns and villages in England, and the causes of dissension are, generally speaking, more of a political than a domestic character, arising out of the imperfect system of internal polity, or rather the intervention of a jealous authority on the

part of the Imperial Parliament and the Supreme Council in England. The importance and necessity of such a local jurisdiction, are not to be disputed; a jurisdiction better adapted to a dulocracy, and the exigencies of the community, than the exercise of an authority vested wholly in the British legislature, or any body of men forming a council, upwards of 3,000 miles from the points of executive administration, and who must necessarily be ignorant of many essential points of internal management, of the abilities of the people to bear taxes and impositions on trade, or of the local laws that might be really needful for the peculiar relations and interests of such a state of society. Government is founded immediately on the necessities of human nature, and to whatever extent it might be conformable to universal reason, the ends proposed by it could scarcely be accomplished, where the legislative and executive power was thus dismembered [1].

[1] A few of our West Indian colonies are governed by orders in council from England, and the palpable misconceptions and errors, and the total inapplicability of many of their provisions, have been clearly demonstrated during the last few years by their repeated reversal. We may here mention an instance of ignorance which occurred some years ago on the part of an individual, whether in Parliament or not, we forget, who interfered in the regulation of

The most prominent and leading cause of the discrepancies we have alluded to in the government of this island, is the absence of nearly all those persons who hold a positive interest in it, and the consequent paucity of men of intelligence and independence, to undertake and to feel that deep interest in the exercise of public duties, which is alone calculated to afford security and confidence to the community at large. The consequences are manifest, because inherently combined with the active impulses of human nature. Every man aspires to a seat in the council or assembly—they are consequently all politicians—many alike covet eminence in other civil appointments — in the militia all would be field-officers; the ineligibility of one is disputed, the incompatibility of several

the Post-office packets. For some reason which appeared to him tenable, probably because larger interests were vested in the island of Jamaica, he urged the expediency of sending the packets to that island before they carried the mails to the lesser colonies, immediately to windward. This is, however, surpassed by the transmission of a government despatch to the Honduras, *via* Jamaica, with instructions on the envelope, " if the packet should have sailed to be forwarded *over-land !*"

Many of our readers may not be aware, that acts passed by the *local* legislatures, are sent home for approval and confirmation by the King in Council.

appointments vested in another is cried down; clergymen and doctors should not sit in the council and as judges, &c.; hence those few men of intelligence and education in the colony, are too often led to compromise their independence, and succumb to the irrational dictates of their compeers.

The administration of justice was deplorably defective; the more especially as it was the point of appeal from the other islands under the presidency, and it had not even the merit of being cheap. Costs of proceedings, particularly in chancery, were oppressive and ruinous in the extreme. In chancery, the governor (a military man) was sole chancellor. The chief-justice of the courts of King's Bench and Common Pleas, and the assistant judges, (one of whom was a clergyman) had not received a legal education; and however honourable and disinterested in the exercise of their duties, the absence of that qualification, necessarily exposed them to frequent errors, occasioned a want of confidence in their decisions, lessened the dignity of the bench, and promoted dissension in the community. The chief-justice also held the offices of judge in admi-

ralty, and master and examiner in chancery, besides the several *entremêts* of member of council, aid-de-camp to the governor, and a long train of et cæteras. He had, nevertheless, done much by his exertions in reducing the heavy arrears of causes in the common law courts, which had produced the most vexatious delays and expense to suitors, besides causing litigation, as a means frequently practised, of withholding the payment of a debt for a period that would compensate in the end for the costs of a verdict.

Corresponding evils existed in other departments. In the office for the registration of deeds, the arrears were truly alarming, with only one clerk to work up the instalments, who appeared to have been "made to order," or selected expressly to support the acknowledged abuses.

> "Infirmity doth still neglect all office,
> Whereto our health is bound, we are not ourselves
> When nature being oppress'd, commands the mind
> To suffer with the body:"——

and reciprocity existed to such an extent between himself and his master, that even their *tails* seemed to sympathize in support of the compact. In the seriousness of truth we disown a particle of ill-

nature in the portraiture, caricature we abominate, faithful representation is our only aim.

The registrar was a truly exemplary character, and he had held several other responsible situations in the colony with credit to himself—but the thing was preposterous, and the consequent inconvenience and expense sustained by individuals who had lodged deeds for registration were serious in the extreme, being compelled to wait the regular order of record, or in the interim to incur enormous expense for office copies.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Kittaphonians should be reputed the greatest questmongers in the Antilles, that lawyers should abound, that eternal colluctation should prevail among all

classes of the community, that the ladies, dear souls, should have been

> ———born to blush unseen,
> And waste their sweetness—on their own ideas,

and that, combined with other causes, the town of Basseterre should present in every direction a poverty stricken appearance, even to the structure which they had reared for the dispensation of their legislative decrees, and the equitable and legal adjustment of their rights. The court-house is unquestionably suitable in its construction for the several purposes contemplated, but the same want of cleanliness and comfort, which marks nearly all their buildings externally, characterize every part of the structure. The unpainted pannels and scantling, the "Jack Spaniards'" nests and cobwebs, and the absence of proper accommodation for visitors, give it in every direction a mean and unfinished appearance. A unit in the *extraordinary* expenditure of the colony would surely provide a few pounds of paint, and a dozen brooms: and a week's labour with a portion of the convict gang, would plant an avenue of trees round "the pasture" aforesaid,

not inappropriately called "*Pell-mell*" Square; give it an air of respectability and comfort, and afford an agreeable promenade. With trifling expense a reservoir of water might be placed in the middle, with a jet d'eau in the centre of it; or a public pump would be a great acquisition to the town residents, who at present submit to drink very indifferent brackish water, although the island in every direction abounds with the purest springs.

We confess a decided predilection for the picturesque, and love to dwell with fervent veneration on the mouldering walls of an old abbey, or baronial castle, the moss-worn battlements, and the ivy-robed tower, and in contemplating such bits of decayed greatness, we prefer the screech of the owl, or the rustling of the eft and toad among the nettles and briars, to the voice or footsteps of man: because in "keeping" with the picture, and with those associations which conjure up before us visions of former days; one patch of whitewash or paint, would destroy the whole harmony of the scene; on the other hand, we would quarrel with Saint Luke in maintaining those essential ornaments, which impart an air of cleanliness and comfort to a

habitation, and would gladly forego a banquet on a table awry, for a mess of porridge and a parallel[1].

Had, indeed, chance thrown us in the way of a patron, to foster the intuitive perceptions of our youth, it is probable we might have become eminent in the school of painting; as it is, *sketching* is the height of our attainment: and after all a faithful outline, or a sketch is as much the *body* of painting, as the details of tone and expression may be said to constitute the *soul* of it, and, without the body, without the outline, all the skill of the painter would fail of effect. It has, we believe, been admitted by the most eminent artists, that they have invariably found difficulty in pourtraying the existence of compound passions, or expressions in the human face, which pass over it, and are lost in a moment, like the shadows of a passing cloud. It is to this circumstance that the most perfect portrait

[1] A few years ago we visited that splendid architectural monument, the cathedral at Wells in Somerset. The man who acted as a conductor over the edifice congratulated us upon the happy moment we had chosen for the inspection of it, observing that had we come a few months before, we should have seen it to much disadvantage, as it was all over dirt and cobwebs. In those few months, worse than sacrilege had been committed, by defacing the whole of its venerable area with a coating of yellow wash.

is invariably subjected to a diversity of opinions affecting the likeness,—without taking into account the opportunity afforded to pay compliments, whereas in a simple outline the imagination is at liberty to give it such colours and combinations of shade and effect, as may be suitable to the impression left on the minds of those who may be capable of identifying the object represented, according to the various circumstances of time and place, and the existence of "certain accidents," as they are technically termed, under which the object may have become familiar to them. Hence it is that we love to open our "sketch book," and to dwell upon the outlines of features which might long since have faded from the memory, to fill them up in the mind's eye, with all the various alternations of expression, and in thus summoning before us at a moment's notice our *absent* friends, to dismiss them as briefly, when we have fed upon the reminiscences they bring with them: and even those on the muster roll of our *passing* acquaintance, unwilling perhaps *in propriâ personâ* to afford us one atom of gratification, irresistibly give a zest to our reveries which surpasseth the relish of a last

bottle. Between lovers nothing is so much coveted as the miniatures of each other, and the reason is obvious. Why should not the custom be common among friends and acquaintances, inducing them to carry about with them numerous fac-similes of themselves to present to those who might desire to enliven their affections toward you, and to retain a permanent recollection of your features? What an interesting "scrap book" would that be which contained the portraits even of your visiting acquaintance: to have them before you as often as agreeable, without rising from your chair, or being "at home" to receive your company; or a cabinet for instance, in which they might all be arranged, relations, friends, acquaintances, creditors perchance, according to the different degrees of their worth, like a scale of harmonic proportions, by which you might play a tune upon your affections in gazing at them. Seriously, the thing should be looked to, it is well worthy a deliberate council of "exclusives," and we should derive infinite satisfaction from seeing it introduced into fashionable life, if only to give employment to numerous artists now languishing in penury.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

There are few spots among the British possessions in this quarter of the world, whose history embodies incidents of a more interesting and diversified character than the island of Saint Christopher, but we can only briefly advert to the most prominent features.

The *Carib* Indians were allowed to remain in quiet possession of it, subjected only to occasional visits from the Spaniards, who landed to obtain water, and with whom, it appears, they maintained terms of amity; until 1623, when an Englishman of the name of Warner, with his son and fourteen men arrived from London, and continued to live, for several months upon peaceable terms with the natives and three Frenchmen whom they found on the island. "All this while," says one of the party, "we lived upon cassada-bread, potatoes, plantains, pines, turtle, guanas, and fish plenty."

Warner returned to England soon afterwards, and in 1625, he again landed with more recruits, on the same day that Monsieur d'Enambuc, a Frenchman, arrived to establish a colony in the

name of the French king. The Indians, who had hitherto manifested a peaceable and friendly disposition towards them whilst they viewed them as visitors, became jealous and apprehensive when they recognised them as settlers. They consequently meditated their destruction, and invited a body of Indians from the neighbouring islands to participate in their murderous purpose. Their intention was, however, communicated to the colonists by one of their women, named Barbe, and one hundred and twenty of them were sacrificed in one night to the vengeance of their intended victims. At the appointed time, when between three and four thousand savages arrived on the coast, they were so unexpectedly and vigorously attacked by the colonists, that two thousand of them were killed and wounded, and those that escaped, fled in disorder to their piraguas [1]. One hundred of the victors were wounded with poisoned arrows, and died in consequence, many of them raving mad.

D'Enambuc and Warner having determined to

[1] These piraguas, or canoes, were formed of the trunk of one tree, sufficiently large to contain as many as thirty or forty persons.

settle in the island, and to divide the lands between them, returned to Europe the same year for supplies. Warner was knighted by Charles I. and through the interest of his patron the Earl of Carlisle, was sent back as governor with 300 colonists. On the 13th May 1627, articles of partition, and a league offensive and defensive against all enemies, were ratified between the French and English settlers, and for the space of two years they proceeded successfully in establishing themselves, and in cultivating tobacco, which yielded them profitable returns. They were not, however, in a situation to offer much resistance to a formidable enemy, and in 1629 they were attacked by the Spaniards under Don Frederick de Toledo, who with fifteen frigates and twenty-four ships of burthen, was proceeding to the Havannah. Many of the settlers succeeded in making their escape by sea, some fled to the mountains, but 600 English were taken prisoners, and were embarked in the vessels the enemy captured in the bay. The Spaniards did not remain long on the spot, and shortly after they had proceeded on their voyage, the routed colonists, some of whom had taken refuge in the neighbouring islands, returned

to their plantations. In this year all the Indians were driven out of the island. Colonists continued to arrive from Europe in such numbers, that in the following year the English settlers amounted to 6000, and in the course of time, as they acquired independence, petty jealousies arose between the French and English, which led to frequent and severe conflicts; and notwithstanding the stipulation in the treaty between France and England, that their colonists should remain neutral in the event of hostilities between the two countries, even before the declaration of war which followed the revolution, the French settlers, instigated by the Irish papists and popish faction, entered the English boundaries and set fire to the houses, putting many of the inhabitants to the sword, and women and young girls were seized and dragged to the French quarters amidst cries and lamentations.

The reason alleged for this sanguinary and unprovoked attack, was the encroachments made by the English in the neighbourhood of Sandy-point, beyond the limits agreed upon, which had been defined by a line drawn from the mountains to a *fig-tree*. The tree had increased so much in circum-

ference, that the English, who continued to carry the line in their mind's eye, to the extreme verge of it, had at length gained sufficient land to build as many as two hundred and fifty houses beyond the limits originally prescribed [1]. Sir Thomas Warner and d'Enambuc met on the spot, after the latter had refused to treat with a deputation sent to him. "Par le corbleu, j'en veux avoir par là," exclaimed d'Enambuc, striking his cane on the ground, and the English were obliged to yield to the demand, and gave up more land than they had taken [1].

[1] The fig-tree alluded to is not the common fig, but the *ficus Indica* or *Bengaliensis*, more generally known by the name of the *banian tree*, remarkable for its amazing size, and the continual and singular means of its increase. Every branch from the main body throws out small fibres, which grow longer and thicker until they reach the ground, and there striking root, become parent stems in their turn, shooting out new branches from the top. In this way, the tree is in a constant state of progressive increase, and represents, from the number of its stems, rather a forest than a single tree. On an island in the river Nerbudha, in the province of Guzerat in the East Indies, is one which has attained a circumference of several thousand feet; the chief trunks of which, exceeding in size English elms and oaks, amounted at one time to three hundred and fifty, and the smaller stems to upwards of three thousand. The absurdity of making such a tree a land-mark is manifest.

[1] Du Tertre, tom. i. Southey's Chronology, vol. i. 277.

Another fig-tree of great dimensions stood at Basseterre; and under its capacious canopy, the French governor, De Poincy, who succeeded d'Enambuc, administered justice, seldom dismissing the parties until they had come to terms and embraced each other. The punishments occasionally inflicted were as summary as the decrees of the judge, and no less characteristic of the state of society at the time [1].

About this time, a spirit of enterprise in favour of colonization pervaded all ranks of society in England, and many noblemen embarked their fortunes in the cause. In 1637, the English population alone, in this island, had increased to no less than 13,000 souls, and Monserrat, Antigua, Nevis, and Barbuda, had in the meantime been colonized by

[1] "Il me souvient," says Du Tertre, "qu'un pauvre nègre de St. Christophe, ayant desia perdu l'une de ses oreilles par ce supplice, comme il fut condamnè à perdre l'autre, il ne voulut jamais permettre qu'on la luy coupast, qu'il n'eût parlé à M. le général de Poincy, ce qui luy ayant este accorde, il se jetta à ses pieds, le pria d'avoir pitié de luy, et de ne pas permettre qu'on luy coupast l'oreille, parce qu'il ne sçauroit plus ou mettre son bout de petun si on la luy ostoit (car c'est une coutume aux nègres d'avoir tonsiours un bout de petun sur chaque oreille, pour fumer en travaillant:) sa simplicité ayant touché M. de Poincy, il luy fit misèricorde," tom. ii. 531.

adventurers from it. Sir Thomas Warner died in the following year, having lived to witness, within the short space of seven years, the establishment, under his auspices, of those important colonies, from which Great Britain has continued to derive a considerable revenue.

In 1642, the island was desolated by a tremendous hurricane, which levelled houses to the ground, destroyed the tobacco and cotton-plants, and wrecked no less than twenty-three vessels heavily laden, among which was one that belonged to the celebrated De Ruyter. The neighbouring sea became so impregnated with the tobacco with which the vessels were chiefly laden, that the surface to a considerable distance, as well as the coasts, was covered with different species of fish which had imbibed the poison.

At the commencement of hostilities between France and England in 1666, a year in which, in the words of Lord Clarendon, "many prodigies were expected, and so many really fell out," and in which a series of disasters attended our settlements in these seas: the English in turn broke the treaty that had been made between the colonists,

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and a bloody conflict ensued which lasted several days, and terminated in favour of the French. Colonels Wats and Morgan, the English commanders, Governor Sales, and M. de Poincy, nephew of the former governor, were killed; and such was the sanguinary and savage disposition of the conquerors, that they refused to deliver up the body of Colonel Wats, and further evinced it by the manner in which they performed the rites of sepulture to their fallen foes. Wats's body was cast down a deep ravine, and upon it were thrown twenty-two waggon loads of the slain, each containing twenty-two dead bodies. The French were now masters of the island: in one month near fourteen hundred English had been forced to quit it, and as many as eight thousand, besides slaves, removed from it afterwards.

In the following year, an unsuccessful attempt was made by the English to recover it, in which Lord Belamont and Colonel Lauvren were killed, all the officers wounded, eight colours were lost, and seven hundred were killed and drowned, besides many taken prisoners. The French shared largely in the misery with which these islands had

been afflicted during the whole of this war; and to add to their distress, this island was again desolated by a tremendous hurricane.

The peace of Breda restored to the English their portion of the island, and for about twenty years, the colonists of the two nations, having been tempered by adversity, continued to live upon more amicable terms. However, in 1689, the French again entered the English territory, and with fire and sword forced all who could escape to fly to the fort for safety: and before succour could be received from Barbadoes, they were obliged to surrender and to quit the island. The conquerors enjoyed only a short-lived triumph: in the following year, 1690, they were attacked by a considerable force under Generals Codrington and Sir Timothy Thornhill, and compelled to surrender upon the same terms that had been exacted from the English [1]. For about seven years the English remained in possession of the whole island, but by the treaty of peace signed at Ryswick, restitution was made of that part formerly held by the French, and they retained it until 1702,

[1] Detailed particulars of this expedition are to be found in the Harleian Miscellany, vol. ix.

when it was again captured by the English, and by the treaty of Utrecht in 1713, it was finally ceded to the crown of Great Britain. Most of the French inhabitants afterwards removed to San Domingo.

In 1720, the population consisted of 2,740 whites, and 7,321 slaves; and four years afterwards, it had increased to 4000 whites, and 11,500 slaves. The sale of crown lands had realised a considerable sum to government, a portion of which, amounting to 40,000*l*, was in 1733, voted to George II. as a marriage portion for his daughter. After this period, many of the white inhabitants emigrated to the neighbouring islands, where colonization had been making a rapid progress, and so opened a wider field for enterprize. Those that remained, continued for many years to share the increasing prosperity which now marked the progress of the several British settlements in these seas, yielding an immense revenue to the British crown, and opening an extensive outlet for her manufactures.

In 1722, the inhabitants suffered from another severe hurricane, which injured most of the plantations, and in the districts of Basseterre, Old Road, and Sandy-point, almost every house, sugar

mill, tree and plant was blown down. Several persons were killed, and many seriously wounded. The damage was estimated at 500,000*l.* sterling.

Towards the latter part of the last century, the West Indies again became a point of active operation between the forces of France and England; opposing to each other a very formidable front in naval and military resources; and in 1782, the inhabitants of Saint Christopher were doomed to experience the miseries of warfare, and to surrender the island to an invading foe. The Marquis de Bouille landed on the 11th of January with 8,000 men, supported by the Count de Grasse with twenty-nine sail of the line, which anchored off Basseterre. Sir Samuel Hood, with twenty-two sail of the line arrived to its relief, but the superior force of the enemy, and the advantages he had already gained, afforded no other results than sharp skirmishing between the two fleets. The loss sustained by the English settlers was estimated at 160,000*l* [1].

[1] During this war, the French gained great advantages in most of their operations, and of all our settlements in these seas, only Jamaica, Barbadoes, and Antigua, remained in our possession.

The treaty of peace, signed at Versailles in the following year, restored the island to the English.

In April 1792, an unusual continuance of heavy rains was the cause of a very destructive flood over the island, and the deepest affliction to the inhabitants of Basseterre in particular. The impetuosity of the waters rushing from the mountains to the sea, carried every thing before it, forming deep gullies in its course; the shrieks and lamentations of the negroes belonging to an adjacent estate, who with their houses, and stock, and all they possessed being forcibly carried away by the currents, were truly appalling. About fifty feet of the wall that enclosed the burial-ground, together with the soil to the depth of five or six feet, were removed. Several houses were swept into the sea, others falling buried the inhabitants beneath the ruins; fences, and walls were destroyed, the

The memorable action which occurred soon after the capture of Saint Christopher, between the two fleets under the Count de Grasse and Admiral Rodney, gave a decisive turn in favour of the English, and prevented a junction of the French fleet with that of the Spaniards at Saint Domingo and Cuba, which would have formed a force of sixty sail of the line, contemplated for an attack on Jamaica.

merchants' cellars were filled with water, mud and sand, and great quantities of provisions were spoiled. The oldest inhabitants were without any recollection of so formidable and destructive an inundation, whereby so many lives had been lost. Several houses were washed into the sea at Old Road, and considerable damage was sustained on the north-side of the island.

In March 1805, this island was again invested by a French squadron with troops on board, 500 of whom landed at Basseterre without opposition, and threatened to burn it in default of immediate payment of 40,000*l.* sterling. The inhabitants with difficulty raised 18,000*l.*, with which the enemy departed, taking six merchant ships at anchor in the Bay, which they carried out to sea and burnt.

So far we have noticed succinctly the inroads which famine, internal dissension, and foreign invasion, have from time to time made upon the peace and advancement of the colonists in this island, and plague follows in the rear of the recital. In 1818, an inveterate fever was prevalent in the island, particularly in the neighbourhoods of Basseterre and Sandy-point, and many of the in-

habitants fell victims to the disease, among whom was the Governor General Probyn.

St. Christopher's is said to have given birth, in a state of slavery, to Christophe, king of Hayti; but according to an official account sanctioned by himself, he was born in the island of Granada, in 1769. He went at an early age to Saint Domingo, where he was a slave as late as 1791. For some time he served in the capacity of waiter at an hotel, and in a privateer. He entertained a superstitious faith in the practices of Obeah.

CHAPTER XXII.

A CALM NIGHT—BITS OF PARADISE—SAINT EUSTATIA—A HOUSE OF MOURNING—THE TOWN—ASCENT TO THE CRATER—AHMAN'S—CRATER DESCRIBED—DESCRIPTION AND POPULATION OF THE ISLAND—PARSON AUDAIN—HISTORICAL SKETCH.

To wander pensive through the shady wood,
Or climb the summit of the topmost hill;
Alike each scene diversified attracts
The feasted eye.

In despite of head winds and weather currents to oppose us in the return, there was no resisting the frequent invitations of Saint Eustatia, as often as we beheld from the shores of Saint Christopher her lofty head towering above the ocean; and after a mess-dinner at Brimstone hill, to wit, at two o'clock in the morning, we embarked from Sandy-point, in an open boat with seven stout negroes, to pay her a visit.

Life is a constant succession of interchangeable contrasts, an ever varying *antiperistasis:* exemplified in the diurnal motion of the earth we inhabit, which is constantly transposing our heads and our heels, whilst we smile in contempt at the same performance by a *professional* tumbler. In the space of half an hour we were conveyed from the boisterous mirth of a military mess-room, to the stern-sheets of the boat in which we embarked, the contrast inducing a feeling that the whole thread of our social life had been spun out, and that we were partaking of a new form of existence. Malignant, indeed, must be the mind of that man, who, blessed with the organs of perception, could have beheld the solemn grandeur, and the profusion of beauty and ornament which marked the intelligent face of nature in that lovely night, without sharing in the hallowed festival, and having his heart gladdened, his senses gratified, and his imagination awakened to a sense of the varied and benevolent manifestations of the presiding Deity. Serenity seemed to pervade the universe, the bright glassy surface of the waters was without a ripple to disturb the glittering images of the studded heavens,

and the moon dispensed her purest beams as if in benediction upon reposing Nature. The balmy breath of the sleeping winds, with fragrance charged, caught from the scent of blooming fruits and flowers, came sporting from the shores, and the wild music of the lizards, the murmuring of the undulating surges on the coast, dying away in distant cadences, seemed to yield to the accordant sounds of the plying oars the sole privilege of disturbing the solemn stillness of the night. The boat resembled a huge sea-bird, skimming the surface of the deep, and casting diamonds from its distended pinions. In such moments, the human voice is profanation, it re-echoes departed sounds, and startles memory from her slumbers, perforates the fragile contexture of the aerostat in which imagination has embarked, and brings it to earth in a moment, with a broken neck. It is no wonder that the elaborate researches of many learned men should have failed to discover the precise situation of the garden of Eden, when it is clear, to our comprehension at least, that since the fall, paradise has been scattered abroad in fragments. It was too much for our first parents to enjoy it as a whole, and we, like our mother Eve, never meet

with a fasciculus, with those exquisite bits which, if again concentrated, might realize a region of earthly felicity, without detecting that they are anti-social; they carry one away from the prosaic palpabilities of real life, of which the serpent gave Eve a foretaste, into the regions of poetry, of which probably she had no idea, and dispose the mind to a semi-savage state of existence,

> "—— A lodge in some vast wilderness,
> Some boundless contiguity of shade,
> Where rumour of oppression and deceit,
> Of unsuccessful and successful war,
> Might never reach us more."

We were close under the land when the report of the morning-gun announced Aurora's presence, and the capacious *mouth* of the crater smiled gratulation upon the new day.

The island, which bears the figure of a cone in one direction, changes its outline in coasting to the westward, where the superficies are less abrupt, and gradually assume a more level surface, which extends for several miles, terminating with hills, and a coast no less precipitous than that in the opposite direction. The town, which denotes a

place of great commercial importance, lies on the south side, and is divided into two parts, called the upper and lower town; the latter, consisting chiefly of warehouses and shops standing a short distance from the beach, flanked and backed by a steep rocky range of cliffs, whose height exceeds that of the tops of the buildings, admitting of public communication with the upper town only by one paved way: several private means of approach to it have, however, been constructed by wealthy burghers, who have calculated upon all the chances and mischances of invasion. The house to which we were conducted, was one of the many capacious buildings formerly occupied by some opulent merchant, although now designated an hotel, without any outward or visible *sign* of entertainment either for man or beast; and the approach to it was encumbered with dirt heaps, and a few lank limbed pigs prowling about for choice bits. There was, nevertheless, as much commotion among the inmates, as usually transpired at the hostelry of Dennis Brulgruddery upon Mucksluch Heath, when chance threw a traveller in the way with no hope of better accommodation within ten miles round. The sen-

sation, however, rather argued that the good Saint Eustatia had revoked her patronage, or that some fatal calamity had befallen the whole generation of the Dykers, than a disposition to receive us as a guest, or to recognise us in any other capacity than as one of the chorus of mourners by whom we were surrounded; and before we had time to inquire into the cause, we were submissively led through two or three large unfurnished rooms, upon the simple invitation to "come and look at her." We gazed silently upon a corpse which was laid upon a table covered with a sheet, whose whiteness was greatly increased in effect, by the black face that was exposed, and whose features denoted considerable age. "Did you hear de morning-gun, sir?"—said the low tremulous voice of a woman that stood near us—the question broke through the dark web our imagination was weaving, and dispelled the images of death and annihilation which mingled in the contexture; and upon answering in the affirmative, the querist rejoined—"Well, she went away with de sound of it—just at dat moment, for all de world as if it 'casion her dedth—but she really had a lang life, and was tired of de

world." Upon demanding her age, we learnt that she had lived one hundred and fifteen years. She was a native of Africa, named Wyker Dykers, and had come to the West Indies in bondage. The woman that addressed us was her daughter. There is an instinctive principle within us, which at times strangely induces a man involuntarily to commit castigation upon his sympathies, without knowing why or wherefore. What had we to do with the departed Wyker Dykers, when our stomach was craving for a breakfast? The unaccountable sensation among the inmates of this notable caravansary, when we entered it, produced that sort of stagnation of the intellects, which may be compared to the temporary inactivity of the waters when at the lowest point of ebbing, and any body floating on the surface may be pulled in either direction without opposition, until the re-action of the flood takes place. "She reăally make ă pretty cărpse!" ejaculated the chief mourner, in long drawling wire-drawn tones; the tide turned in a moment, and we turned with it like a vessel at anchor yielding to its influence, and in doing so, we encountered two black fellows in the back-

ground, frantic in *bolero* action, and half a dozen of the sniffling sobbing bystanders were laughing in the same breath. In two seconds the curtain had fallen before the dramatis personæ, and we were vociferating loudly for breakfast in another room. Up to this moment we have never clearly ascertained, whether a negro takes most delight in a funeral or a wedding. And now for a walk over the town.

Dilapidation and fallen credit were undeniably stamped upon the aspect of the place, but in them could be clearly traced the proof that great wealth had once given an impetus to industry, and favored the designs of extensive enterprise in trade. The anchorage, which is an open roadstead, where hundreds of ships, laden with rich cargoes, have at times assembled, was without even one vessel to break the vast expanse of water.

Many of the buildings, which are in the Dutch style of architecture, are capacious and imposing in appearance, but the mortar between the stones and bricks appears to have suffered premature decay, and having worked out of the interstices, increases the desolated effect produced by other signs of dilapidation and depopulation. The upper town,

where the principal inhabitants reside, wears a more pleasing and diversified aspect; many of the houses standing detached in gardens, and deriving shade and coolness from numerous fruit-trees growing in the vicinity. We experienced great civility and kindness from the governor, who resided in a large formal-looking house about two miles from the town; he had formerly served in the British navy, and professed great esteem for the nation, of which he gave a practical illustration in the exercise of every attention to those who chanced to visit the island. He furnished us with horses to convey us as far as practicable towards the "squill" or crater, and guides to assist us in reaching the summit. In visiting this "lion" of the colony, you follow a straight sandy road for about three miles from the town before the ascent commences to any perceptible degree, but striking into a bridle path which runs between thick brush-wood and trees, and loose rocks, the route becomes more intricate; your horse begins to breathe hard; your seat on the saddle is uneasy; you instinctively cast a look behind to measure the distance of a retrograde movement that would insure you a broken neck, and about

ten chances to one, you discover your *guide* hanging by the horse's tail, as if to promote the catastrophe.

About one-third of the distance up the ascent to the crater, brought us to a projecting surface, partly of artificial construction, on which stood a building of considerable extent, designed for a residence, with several domestic offices detached. It was evident the whole structure had cost enormous expence and labour, and no less evident, from the growth of rank weeds and wild shrubs in every direction, and from the visible signs of dilapidation and decay about the buildings, that it had been long abandoned. One room, about sixty feet in length, was decorated on all sides with elaborate shellwork and mirrors; a fragment of the toy which had amused the mind or gratified the vanity of a rich merchant named Ahman, in the attempt to realize fairy-land with the magic wand of wealth. We found here that the worthy governor had provided an essential stimulus to the exertions we were to undergo in gaining the summit of the mountain; and having partaken of the viaticum, we prosecuted the undertaking on foot, entering immediately the

Ascent to the Crater.

thick, and in some places, impenetrable forest of stunted trees which clothe the rugged acclivities to the very edge of the crater. The entangled underwood and loose rocks, greatly impeded our progress, but we gained the summit in about three quarters of an hour from Ahman's, with less difficulty than we had been led to expect, although so prodigiously affected by sudatory emissions, that we might reasonably have apprehended the influence of a dissolvent charm, as a punishment for our temerity in venturing so near to the "Devil's Punch-bowl." In such cases, resolute action overcomes the most fearful consequences, so we prepared to walk *into* it. But what a magnificent scene lay before us!—Immediately at our feet a broad belt of dense forest, with green and russet hues of various shades glowing in the expanded beams of the meridian sun, represented an impenetrable barrier between us and the "busy world" which lay beyond it. The more lively and diversified forms of the plantations, broken by clusters of trees and detached dwellings, the distant town, and the many varied objects that denote active industry, deriving distinctness in the distance more

from association than from positive assurance—the white fringe of the foaming surf that broke upon the shores, and the encircling ocean bounding the range of sight, formed a picture of exquisite combination and effect. Such a picture as

> " Leaves reason, faith, and conscience all our own."

The descent into the crater, although less fatiguing was no less difficult than the course to arrive at its summit; being in some places nearly perpendicular, and safety *depending* on the trunks and boughs of the trees which grow from between the fissures of the rocks, among which were several coffee-trees, and others of greater dimensions; and we involuntarily stopped occasionally to measure the obstructions in our return. We were, however, amply compensated for our trouble upon reaching the bottom, where vegetation was equally dense, and of much larger growth, denying us the privilege of making a fair estimate of the extent of the level it occupied, but which appeared somewhere about twenty acres. There were several wild banana or plantain plants, and coffee-trees, intermixed with larger productions in wild luxuriance; and near to a small clear pool

of water stood a silk cotton tree, on whose trunk were carved several names, among which was that of the German missionary, Schwartz, who visited the spot many years before us. The place was the beau ideal of solemn seclusion; the only sounds, save our own voices, were the melancholy notes of the Ramier, or wild pigeon, and the faint twittering of smaller birds. It was delightfully cool and serene, the sun's rays catching only one side of the capacious circle above us, beyond which was nothing but the vaulted heavens, and as we looked upwards, a fairy hand scattered the white fragments of a rejected love letter to startle us in our contemplations. Such was the effect produced by the white silvery leaves of some of the trees which flickered against the darker foliage. The water in the pool, although clear, had a sulphurous flavour, but there were no evident signs of volcanic action about the place, beyond that which the crater itself indicated; the latest eruption having taken place upwards of 190 years before. The depth of the crater is supposed to be below the level of the sea, its circumference at the top being about two miles.

We found ourselves at government-house, or

rather the house of the governor—for we are particular in our relations—at 5 P.M., and partook of a liberal diet, some excellent burgundy, detected the custom of introducing cheese before pastry and sweets, of which there was a liberal portion, and slept soundly till morning, in despite of the machinations of Beelzebub, who assailed us in the shape of Mosquitoes, that he might exact a few oaths as a tribute for our curiosity.

There are very few sugar estates in this island, seldom producing more than 1200 tierces, of which only 900 were the crop of this year; provisions, consisting chiefly of yams, are generally reared, and exported in boats to Saint Martin's and Saint Thomas's. The population consisted only of between three and four hundred whites and coloured, and about two thousand slaves, although in times of its prosperity, of which we shall speak in our historical sketch, it amounted to as many as 5000 whites and 15,000 slaves. The garrison consisted of sixty foot soldiers, and a militia was embodied to about an equal number. The salary of the governor was only 1,800 dollars a year, which with perquisites incidental to his government over the islands of Saint

Martin's and Saba, and forty dollars a month for house rent, there being no residence provided, augmented it to about 3,000 dollars or 675*l.* sterling. And this was once the most wealthy spot in the Antilles.

We heard with infinite surprise and gratification that parson Audain was now located among the Dutch at Saint Eustatia, and we hoped to feast our sight on this renowned model of the Antinomian school; but, albeit we might have passed him in the streets, we had no innate perception, no prescience of his presence to gratify our wishes. It was said that there was no priest in the island when Audain made his appearance there. "He was become liberally minded by misfortune," says Mr. Coleridge, "and he was always actuated by a faith of such immense catholicity that it comprehended within its circle every radiation of opinion from the centre of Christianity, as the felly embraceth the spokes of a wheel. Audain offered to minister to all the sects respectively, which the free traders thankfully accepted. In the morning he celebrated mass in French, in the forenoon read the liturgy of the Church of England, in the afternoon spräckened the Dutch service, and at nightfall

chanted to the Methodists. Audain was a married man, and his wife resided at Bristol. A Dutch widow, rich, pious and large, cast a widow's eye on Audain; the rigour of creole viduity softened under the afternoon spräckenings of Audain, as Dutch butter melts under the kisses of Titan, and she told Audain, that if Heaven had made her such a man, she would have married twice. The hint was as broad as herself; but Audain liked it the better for its dimensions, and married her on the spot, spräckening the service himself."

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

The French from Saint Christopher's took possession of this island in 1629, but in consequence of a scarcity of water, they abandoned it in 1632. This evil was, however, remedied by the Dutch, who constructed cisterns, they having, in 1635, sent a colony consisting of 600 families, to the island, and they remained in possession of it till 1666, when it was taken by two hundred buccaneers from Jamaica, commanded by Colonel Morgan. Besides a great quantity of merchandize and cattle,

as many as 500 negroes fell into the hands of the captors. Towards the end of the same year it was retaken by the combined Dutch and French forces, the latter retaining possession of it till the peace of Breda, which followed soon after, when it was restored to the Dutch, who continued the possessors for upwards of twenty years. In 1689 they were attacked by the French under Count de Blenac, and not being in a situation to offer much resistance, they were obliged to surrender. In the following year, however, the French were in turn attacked by the English, and compelled to capitulate to the forces under Major General Thornhill, after the reduction of Saint Christopher's. The island continued in the hands of the English for a period of seven years, until the treaty of Ryswick restored it to the Dutch, who, under the auspices of a chartered company were extending their settlements in this quarter of the world, and Saint Eustatia became an important entrepôt.

In 1772 it shared in the devastation experienced in most of the neighbouring islands, from a severe hurricane—400 houses were destroyed, the church was blown into the sea, and every plantation-house,

except two, was levelled with the ground. Eight years only had elapsed from the date of this calamity, namely in 1780, when the island was again laid waste by another, perhaps the most tremendous hurricane that ever visited these settlements; seven homeward bound ships, laden with merchandise, were dashed to pieces, and every soul on board perished, nineteen others were driven to sea. During the night, every house to the northward and southward was blown down, or washed away with the inhabitants. On the following day the wind shifted, and swept away every other house to the east and west. Between four and five thousand persons perished, and the damage was estimated at 150,000*l.* sterling. Independently of its extraordinary violence, and the ruin and devastation it produced in every direction within the range of its action, the hurricane of this year extended its ravages to a far wider extent than has been known on any other occasion to have characterized these awful visitations in this part of the world.

In Jamaica its effects were more partial, but no less disastrous; and combined with those of an earthquake, which accompanied it, convey to the

imagination a picture of the most dreadful calamities, to which it is possible to give the tone of reality. The inhabitants of Savannah-la-Mar, beheld, in the first instance, the sea swelling into a strange unwieldy mass, and on a sudden, bursting through all bounds, and surmounting all obstacles, it overwhelmed the town, and swept every thing away so completely upon its retreat, as not to leave the smallest vestige of man, beast, or habitation behind. The sea flowed half a mile beyond its usual limits; and so sudden and unavoidable was the destruction, although it took place at noon, that of the inhabitants of one gentleman's house, consisting of ten whites and forty negroes, not a soul escaped. About 300 persons perished in this prelude to what immediately followed. About one o'clock, the wind increased to a perfect tempest, which continued unabated till nearly eight o'clock in the evening. Forty of the inhabitants who had sought shelter in the court-house were killed by its yielding to the fury of the elements, and their bodies were buried in the ruins—at ten there was a shock of an earthquake, and the waters subsided; all the vessels

in the bay were dashed to pieces, or driven on shore. His Majesty's ship Princess Royal, was lifted by the earthquake upon her beam ends, and fixed upright in a firm bed, where she afterwards served as a house for the inhabitants. In one parish alone, the damage was estimated at near 700,000*l.* sterling.

The whole island of Barbadoes, was one scene of desolation and misery. Here the hurricane, which was several days later than at Jamaica, lasted about forty eight hours. In the afternoon of the first day, all the ships were driven from the anchorage, and in the course of the night nearly the whole of Bridgetown was laid level with the earth, burying the inhabitants in its ruins. Not one house or building in the island, however strong or sheltered, was exempt from damage, and 4326 persons and most of the live stock perished: the loss of property was estimated at 1,320,564*l.* sterling. Such was the incredible violence of the tempest, that upon the authority of a public document sent to the Secretary of State by the Governor of the island, a twelve pounder gun was by the wind and waves carried a distance of 140 yards.

At Grenada nineteen loaded Dutch ships were stranded and beaten to pieces.

At Saint Vincent, every building was blown down, and two men of war wrecked.

At Martinique four ships foundered in Fort Royal Bay, and every soul perished—every house in Saint Pierre's was blown down, and upwards of a thousand persons were killed. At Fort Royal Town, the cathedral, seven churches, the governor's house, the senate-house, the prisons, the hospitals, the barracks, and upwards of 1400 houses, were destroyed. In the hospital of Notre Dame, 1600 patients, with the nurses and attendants, were nearly all buried in the ruins. Upwards of 9000 persons in this island alone, perished in this hurricane.

The fleet and convoy under Admiral Rowley proceeding from Jamaica to England, were mostly dismasted, and all disabled. His Majesty's ship Stirling Castle, of 64 guns, was totally wrecked on the coast of Espaniola, and only a few of the crew saved. The part of the wreck from which the survivors were taken, was driven to sea, without a drop of fresh water, or any provisions except a few

pieces of pork, which they picked up. In this situation they were driven about for several days, many of them dying raving mad, and those who survived, sucked the blood of their dead companions for sustenance. They were saved by a small vessel, and carried to Espaniola.

The Thunderer, seventy-four, was supposed to have foundered in the gale, no particulars of her fate having ever transpired. The Phœnix was wrecked on the coast of Cuba, with the loss of twenty of her crew. And the Barbadoes and Victor, sloops of war, with the Chameleon, Scarborough, and La Blanche frigates, were also sacrificed to the rage of the elements.

The calamitous consequences experienced by the colonists of Saint Eustatia from this destructive hurricane, were immediately afterwards followed by invasion on the part of the English, who had just declared war against Holland. "In the West Indies," says the manifesto, "particularly at Saint Eustatia, every protection and assistance has been given to our rebellious subjects. Their privateers are openly received into the Dutch harbours, allowed to refit there, supplied with arms and

ammunition, their crews recruited, their prizes brought in and sold; and all this in direct violation of as clear and solemn stipulation as can be made." Being a free port, Saint Eustatia was open to all the subjects of the belligerent powers, and a communication was established among them, through which they were enabled to carry on a commercial correspondence, greatly to the advantage of the Dutch, who enjoyed vast profits by the sale of prizes and merchandise, and the interchange of commodities upon their own terms. This was their position, when, in February 1781, the British forces, under Admiral Rodney and General Vaughan, appeared off the island. The governor and inhabitants, being totally unprepared for such a demonstration, were compelled to surrender. Upwards of one hundred and fifty sail of ships and vessels, many of them richly laden, and six Dutch vessels of war, were captured in the bay: and the warehouses in the town were not sufficient to contain the quantity of commercial articles imported for sale, the beach and streets being covered with packages. We have been credibly informed, that such was the great influx of trade, and wealth abounded

to such an extent, that it was common to measure doubloons in buckets[1]. But resistance to the invaders would have been utterly useless; and property, to the value of four millions sterling, fell into the hands of the captors. "I have daily experience of the iniquitous practices," says Admiral Rodney in his despatch, "and the treasonable correspondence carried on by those calling themselves British merchants, settled in this Dutch island; and am fully convinced, by intercepting hundreds of letters, that if it had not been for their treasonable correspondence and assistance, the American war must have been long since finished, nor could the French islands have been supported."

Saint Eustatia had become one of the greatest auctions that ever was opened in the universe. Invitation was given, and protection afforded, to purchasers of all nations, and of all descriptions. Great part of the treasure captured was sent to England, under protection of a small squadron of men of war. The natural strength of the place,

[1] A doubloon is equal to sixteen dollars, or 3*l.* 12*s.* sterling.

however, which rendered it almost impossible to effect a landing even with a small force to oppose it, proved the ruin of the new possessors, who, confident in their inaccessible situation, and elated by the acquisition they had obtained, were regardless of the trifling means required to make it impregnable. Of this, it appears, the French had been made acquainted, and the English were shortly afterwards surprised by a French force under the Marquis de Bouille, which landed in the night, about two leagues from the town, at the only practicable place left unguarded. A division of the garrison, which consisted of 723 men of the 13th and 15th regiments, was on parade, when the first intimation of an enemy, was a volley of small arms fired close to them. Several were killed, and the rest were incapable of resistance, and the enemy entered the fort with the fugitives. The island was thus lost in a few minutes, without the expense of a man to the enemy, who obtained a spoil estimated at two millions of livres.

The French continued in possession of the island until 1801, when they evacuated it, carrying with them as much plunder as their vessels could stow.

It was immediately afterwards taken possession of by an English force from Saint Christopher's, and was restored to the Dutch upon the termination of hostilities in the following year.

In 1810, it again surrendered to the English, and remained in their possession till 1814, when it reverted to the Dutch, together with the island of Saba, and the Dutch portion of the island of Saint Martin's.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE SALT-PONDS AT ST. KITT'S—MOSQUITOS—ANECDOTE—NEVIS—CHARLESTOWN—MINERAL BATHS—APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRY—PLANTERS' DWELLINGS—DINNERS—EXOTIC JOINTS—NEGROES—HISTORICAL SKETCH.

"For he is but a bastard to the time,
That doth not smack of observation."

King John.

AFTER a few days passed agreeably enough among the Dutch, we returned by the same conveyance to Sandy Point.

The vicinity of Nevis to Saint Christopher's, separated only by a channel of about a mile and a half, admits of frequent communication between them in open boats; but the narrow neck of land which forms the south-eastern part of the latter island, extending for upwards of eight miles, affords to the inhabitants no convenient point of embarka-

tion nearer than Basseterre, without traversing a wild and barren country, that boasts only of one solitary sugar plantation in the neighbourhood of extensive salt ponds.

It was from Basseterre that we embarked in a small boat to visit the island of Nevis; and in ten minutes, the town and shipping, and all signs of cultivation and human industry, were excluded from the sight by the protruding headlands, and the continuous steep acclivities of the rocky and sterile shores, which frowned upon us with truculent aspect as we glided over the smooth surface beneath them. A pretty little seductive cove, with a white sandy beach and a few trees, at length suddenly opened upon us, and a solitary dwelling in the perspective, with green cane-fields in the vicinity, gave additional interest to a scene, strikingly contrasted with the dreary wilderness which surrounded it.

We abominate the purpose that carries us to a given point without being permitted to expatiate freely on the road, or to stop, if occasion call for it, to share in a proffered benefit. To be impelled like a ball from a cannon, which becomes useless when it reaches its goal, without even killing a

man on its way, is to contravene the ends and purpose of travelling, and affords a man about as much information of what exists between his starting point and the antipodes, as if he had been conveyed in a packing-case, or performed his journey, as the citizens would term it, "between the lights." We yield to the tortoise all the advantages it may gain in distance from the even tenor of its way, whilst we pursue the devious courses of the hare, changing the scene, and whiffing fresh fragrance at every double. And so we landed, the boat was pulled high on the beach, and we proceeded to the salt-ponds. The appearance of the surrounding country is barren in the extreme; the scanty herbage scarcely meeting the demands of a number of sheep and goats which graze on the rugged inequalities, and which, excepting a few ground-doves and lizards, a stray sparrow-hawk or gawling, are the only signs of animate nature, until the sight is relieved by the plantation of which we have spoken, occupying a more level and fruitful surface. The effect is, however, heightened by the contrast, rather than produced by redundant fertility; for, such is the poverty of the soil, and the arid appear-

ance of vegetation, that they seem to reproach the cultivators for the labour they have bestowed. The salt-ponds are in the immediate vicinity of the sugar estate, and in very dry weather, which is favourable to the condensation of the salt, every object, for a considerable distance in their neighbourhood, is covered with the minuter particles which have evaporated from them; producing the singular effect of a hoar-frost glistening in the scorching sunbeams, with no other sign of a thaw, than diffluent meanderings from every pore of your skin. In such seasons, the sugar-canes languish, and yield an unprofitable crop; and in like manner, the salt-ponds fail in weather more suitable to vegetation. Lady Brisco had credit for the *ownership* of these estates, (an equivocal term when applied to West Indian property in these days) and they were rented by a monstrous agreeable man, who, in addition to his sugar and salt, possessed the *aliorum, condimentorum, condimentum,* of open-hearted hospitality, surpassing Kitchiner's zest, or the profound mysteries of the King of Oude's, or the Duke of Gloucester's sauces. He had, moreover, a pretty unaffected daughter, whose fair fingers

sprinkled music's love-inspiring sounds over the felicitous moments as they passed, imparting gladness to every subordinate soul that moved within her orbit, and demonstrating the position that contentment may be found in a wilderness reconciled even to mosquitos. Myriads of these edacious cacodemons, which are generated in the adjacent ponds, infested every corner of the room, probably holding a jubilee in honour of our arrival, in which we were to be sacrificed, with unmerciful severity, as a propitiatory offering to Beelzebub. No one appeared to regard them but ourselves, and upon our giving intimation that one had lodged on the nose of our host, he took no pains to disturb the intruder, but merely related an anecdote. One of these incorrigible tormentors of new comers to their dominions, had settled on a gentleman's nose, whose erubescence indicated luxurious habits, and having as quickly departed—" Eh, me Gad," exclaimed a negro servant with vociferous exultation, addressing himself to the vagrant bloodsucker, " you no tan dere long—you burn you foot, eh ?"

After having passed at the salt-ponds one of those agreeable parentheses in life, which frequently have

more meaning than half a dozen pages of every day existence, we departed on the following morning for Nevis.

The appearance of Nevis from the sea has been mentioned already. It is nearly of a circular form, containing about 24,640 acres, of which only 6000 are capable of culture, the lofty conical mountain, which attains an elevation of about a mile and a half, occupying the centre of the island like a pastile half burnt out. Charlestown is, indeed, a pretty spot, and the superior neatness of the houses, which range along a smooth sandy bay, like white teeth above an expanded under lip, the upper one being partially hid by mustachios formed of trees—the gay green and yellow tattooing on the upland cheeks of the island—the darker foliage of its aborescent curls above—but the simile is too masculine for such exquisite beauty, we must nevertheless follow it, and give it feminine additament—and the white fleecy clouds which commonly crown its summit, like a cap of the finest lawn, give it an *ensemble*, which resembles the head and shoulders of an Indian queen bathing in full dress. The town, which is much smaller

than Basseterre, is no less prepossessing on landing, from the cleanliness and respectability of the buildings, many of which are painted outside. The court-house is infinitely superior in all its arrangements to the one at St. Kitt's. About a mile out of the town, in a southerly direction near the sea, is a large stone building, which has been constructed at great expense as a sort of boarding-house for invalids, many of whom come from the other colonies for the benefit of the mineral baths, which are said to have wrought miraculous cures of leprosy, and other cutaneous disorders. Sir Hans Sloane says he mastered a severe cough by bathing and drinking the water, during a few days' stay in the island. At one part of the stream which supplies the baths, there are two springs, one so intensely cold as to produce a chill through the whole frame, and the other too hot to be borne by the naked foot. There are several other hot springs in the island.

The general aspect of the country, although not less verdant, is less picturesque than Saint Christopher's owing to the want of that variety of forms which characterize that island; and the profusion

of loose stones which cover the surface, some of which have been formed into walls of inclosure, and line the roads on each side, and the marly character of the soil, give it, in some places, an exposed and arid appearance. This description of soil, however, is prodigiously productive, and in imparting a peculiar property to the cane-juice, a strong-grained bright greyish sugar is produced which is much coveted by the refiners, and consequently maintains a good price in the English markets. Notwithstanding the effect we have spoken of, the island abounds in beautiful detached scenes, which lie in different elevations from the sea; and the planters' houses, which are better appointed, and altogether more civilized in appearance, than we found them in common at Saint Kitt's, and the white stone wind-mills, breaking the green massy shades of cane-fields and wood, afford the prettiest sight imaginable in riding round the island. The roads are very indifferent, having in some places uneven rocky surfaces over which the heavy torrents have passed in their descent from the mountains, occasioning in other places deep chasms, which require constant filling up to make them passable.

The Nevisians, nevertheless, manage to get their gigs over them, but the saddle is the best conveyance.

At the president's we found every thing to put one in good humour, because every thing appeared to reflect it. With the exception of some of the country houses at Santa Cruz, we had seen nothing elsewhere that indicated a settled residence. The dwellings and the inmates appeared not to be contemporary, but rather to suggest the idea that the latter had merely taken shelter. Their dinners on some occasions certainly changed the tone of the picture amazingly, reminding one of a scene in one of Scott's novels, we believe, in which a sumptuous banquet, with relays in the rear—we do not mind the misnomer—rise from the floor, no one caring about the walls or the hangings, with a happy concentration of dainties before him. By the by, it has fallen to our lot to do the agreeable with a round of beef, or a ham, on such occasions. In the name of the goddess Fessonia, dear reader, avoid if thou canst, a presiding seat over those delectable joints, or make up thy mind to an arduous performance in satisfying the demands upon thy skill and

patience. Both those joints are exotic in these islands, and the creoles covet them; the native beef is generally indifferent, and the climate resists the process of salting. At the residence of the president of Nevis, every thing indicated ease and comfort. In the absence of carpets, which are too warm, and engender vermin, there was oil-cloth, and a sufficiency of good furniture; and the taste and judgment of the owner were no less manifest in the sugar-works and offices. His cattle too, were sleek and healthy, disclaiming an unprofitable parsimony, or an inhuman indifference to their condition; and we found the same demonstration of an independent spirit, in despite of mortgages and accounts current, on the estates of Mr. Rawlins and others, who had adopted the laudable resolution of living on their properties.

There was nothing in the appearance of the negroes that indicated a difference to those of Saint Kitt's; they were all clad in the same way, enjoyed the same privileges, and appeared equally happy.

The island is divided into five parishes, each having an episcopal church, and there are several methodist chapels.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

The first English vessel seen in the West Indies is supposed by Hakluyt to have been the one in which Sir Thomas Pert and Sebastian Cabot sailed on a voyage of discovery about the eighth year of Henry VIII. Within a few years of this period an English vessel arrived at Porto Rico, whose captain stated that he had a license from the King of England to seek for the territories of the Great Cham. The vessel was 250 tons burthen, had two guns on the forecastle, and seventy men, with different description of merchandise. The captain was ignorant of the course and distance from thence to Hispaniola, and upon arriving there, after waiting two days for permission to trade, the batteries fired upon the vessel, which afterwards returned to Porto Rico. Such was the jealousy of the Spaniards excited by the appearance of an English ship in these seas, that the government blamed the governor for not seizing the vessel, instead of driving her away, in order

to prevent her taking home information respecting the islands[1].

The enterprising character of man, especially in those days, with a new world open to his speculations, was not to be subdued by such remonstrances, nor by the exercise of a preposterous monopoly, and thenceforward a spirit of competition prevailed among the leading powers of Europe, in investigating its resources, and in the attainment of the vast wealth with which it was supposed to abound. From this time, ships from France, Portugal, and England resorted hither, but as we have observed in a former part of this work, the Caribbean islands remained unsettled to a much later period, nearly a century from the time of which we are speaking.

In 1605, Nevis was visited by an English vessel bound for Virginia, whose captain was so much out in his reckoning as to cause him to mistake the island of Saint Lucia for the Bermudas. The vessel stopped here about a fortnight, and

[1] Southey's Chronology, i. 143. Herrera states that this event took place in 1519. According to Oviedo it was in 1527.

embarked twenty tons of lignum vitæ, which the crew found in abundance. They caught a turtle of such enormous size that they could not get it into the boat, but towed it alongside of the ship, and it was with great difficulty got on board. Two years afterwards three other English ships, also bound for Virginia, visited this island, and obtained "great store of conies, sundry kinds of fowles, and great plenty of fish." At this time it was in a state of nature, clothed with thick forests and arborescent vegetation from the mountains to the sea; but in 1628, after Sir Thomas Warner had settled Saint Christopher's, a few English families removed from thence, who were so successful in their undertakings, that others were invited to follow them, and in 1640 the population had increased to 5000 whites and 12,000 negroes, in an island not more than fourteen miles in circumference. Most of the governors who subsequently held jurisdiction over the several islands of Antigua, Saint Christopher's, Nevis, and the Virgin Islands, gave a preference to Nevis as a residence, which materially promoted its welfare, and it has been less subjected to those serious

disasters, and international changes, by which the colonists of Saint Christopher's have so frequently suffered.

After the restoration, when trade flourished with the peace, it enjoyed a degree of prosperity that might have satisfied the most sanguine expectations of the settlers; but in their security from foreign invasion, they encountered disasters consectaneous with those awful visitations of Providence, which on several occasions desolated the neighbouring islands. In 1689, a malignant fever carried off a large number of the inhabitants; and in the following year, a violent earthquake levelled almost every house with the ground. It commenced about five o'clock in the evening with strange hollow sounds, which appeared to issue from the crater. A tremulous motion of the earth followed, opening in several places, and throwing out water;—large trees were uprooted and swallowed by the yawning abyss, and the sea left its ordinary bounds for about one-third of a mile, leaving many large fish on the shores. Upon returning, the shocks were repeated. The agitation of the sea was so great, even as far as Martinique, that many persons imagined, from the

attendant vibration of their vessels, that they were striking on rocks, and a large portion of the island of Redonda split, and fell into the sea, throwing up a cloud of dust, accompanied with noise like the report of cannon. For some years after this awful event, the inhabitants experienced no other cause of disquiet than apprehension of invasion from the French; and the peace of Ryswick gave them further assurance of tranquillity. The declaration of war against France and Spain, by Queen Anne in 1702, again excited their fears, and in 1705, a considerable French force landed in the night, and within three days compelled them to capitulate. After burning their houses and sugar-works, and extorting by threats and acts of barbarity, a written promise to send to Martinique a stipulated number of negroes, or an adequate contribution in money, they quitted the island, carrying with them between three and four thousand slaves. This was a severe blow, but another and another awaited them in quick succession, for, in the following year, an inveterate drought prevailed over the island, which destroyed every description of edible root and fruit, excepting a small prickly cucumber of an oviform

shape, which abounded in such infinite numbers, as to contribute chiefly to the support of the suffering inhabitants. And in the succeeding year, another severe hurricane blasted reviving vegetation, and carried desolation over the whole island. The population had now decreased to 1104 whites, and 3676 negroes. After this period the island again revived, its population increased, and for many years nothing transpired that merits particular notice.

In 1761, a conspiracy was discovered among the negroes to murder all the white inhabitants, at a time when many were suffering from a severe sickness which prevailed in the colony; and in 1772, the island shared in the devastation occasioned in most of these islands by a tremendous hurricane—scarcely a house was left standing. In 1782, Nevis shared the fate of Saint Christopher's, by being compelled to yield to the powerful forces of the French in these seas, under the command of the Marquis de Bouille and the Count de Grasse, but the peace signed at Versailles in the following year, restored it to the English.

After returning to Saint Christopher's, we embarked in a mail-boat for the island of Antigua, with the wind dead on end to afford us amusement in a traverse course. We were close under Rodonda, on the following evening, as the sun was setting behind it. It is merely a barren rock, rising in rugged masses from the sea, inhabited only by sea fowl, and which at a distance appears like a hay-cock.

Redonda, bearing S.W. by W.

A story is told of a French ship of war which approached this rock in the night, and mistaking it for a large vessel under sail, hailed it without receiving a satisfactory reply. Crapeau took offence at hearing his words echoed to him as if in contempt of his summons, and thereupon fired a broadside into it. The rock reverberated the sound of the

guns, like the report of firing from another vessel, sending a few of the Frenchman's shot back to him by a rebound, and in this way a heavy cannonade was kept up between the parties, till Aurora came in as arbiter, and satisfied the Frenchman that he was in the wrong. The same story is told of the "sail rock," near the island of Saint Thomas.

Du Tertre mentions a singular adventure which took place off this island in 1656, and which is strikingly characteristic of the ferocity and determined courage of the Caribs, who at this time continued to molest the settlers in these islands, most frequently by landing in the night, massacring the inhabitants near the coast, and departing with all the plunder they could obtain. They had just made a descent upon Saint Bartholomew's, where they had killed sixteen persons and wounded several others; and proceeding thence to Anguilla, they there killed almost all the men, plundered and burnt the houses, and carried away the women and children. The vessel in which Du Tertre had embarked, was proceeding from Martinique to Saint Christopher's, and encountered off Rodonda nine piraguas full of these savages and their prisoners.

The largest came boldly forward to reconnoitre, and manœuvred with such dexterity, that the designs of the French captain to run it down, were of no avail. Half the number of savages in this canoe was employed at the oars, and the others held each of them two arrows on their bowstring ready to let fly. When within about twenty paces of the vessel, they made hideous cries and hootings, preparatory to the attack, but a gun discharged from the ship loaded with "a large ball, an iron chain, and two bags of old nails, and musket balls," killed upwards of twenty of them, and stove the canoe, which filled with water. Two soldiers on board the French vessel were wounded by their poisoned arrows, one in the finger, which was cut off, and the other in the thigh, who died a few days afterwards. The other piraguas now closed, and continued the attack, notwithstanding almost every shot from their opponent killed one of the savages. While they were thus engaged "an old captain of the savages," says Du Tertre, "seeing M. de Maubray upon the poop, shot an arrow at him with such violence that it broke the vessel's bell, without which he would have been killed: M de Maubray

immediately shot him through the side, and was about finishing him with his pistol, when the savage threw himself into the sea, with his bow and arrows, where all the others, even the wounded, followed him. As soon as they were all in the water, we tried to save some prisoners that were in the piragua, and easily got out two young Frenchmen; but as we were trying to get an English girl out, an old female savage bit her in the shoulder, and tore out as much flesh as her mouth could hold. In doing this, she received a blow with a half pike on the neck which made her drop her prize, but it did not prevent her throwing herself upon the girl and biting her a second time before she could be got out of the piragua. We also tried to save a young English lady, the mistress of the girl, but in the attempt, a chest on which she had placed herself upset, and we never saw her again. While we were thus occupied, the old savage captain, who had been wounded by M. de Maubray, came towards us, and raising his body half out of the water, like a triton, holding two arrows on the string of his bow, fired them at us, and dived immediately under the water: he re-

turned thus bravely five times to the charge; and his strength failing before his courage, we saw him fall backwards and sink to the bottom. In the beginning of the action, we saw a young savage in the water that could not be more than two years old, moving his little hands, but it was impossible to save him. The survivors saved themselves on the small island of Rodonda[1]."

[1] Du Tertre, tom. i. 509. Southey's Chronology, ii. 17.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ANTIGUA—ST. JOHN'S HARBOUR—TROPICAL MORNINGS—THE TOWN—WEST INDIA TAVERNS—EXCHANGE AND CURRENCY—JOHN GORDON—PRIVATE THEATRICALS—GOVERNMENT-HOUSE AND GOVERNORS—THE LADIES—STATE OF SOCIETY.

" Let me play the fool :—
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come,
And let my liver rather heat with wine,
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans."

Merchant of Venice.

We glided gently over smooth water into the harbour of Saint John's, Antigua, about midnight, and anchored in a small cove, the usual rendezvous of the mail-boats. The harbour, which lies on the western side of the island, is of a deep irregular form, well sheltered by the surrounding hills, and deriving security from the narrowness of its entrance, which on the north side is defended by Fort James, situated at the extremity of a narrow neck of land; and on the other, by a battery on a sugar-

loaf promontory called "Goat-hill," whence signals are made to the town. Considerable security is also afforded by a bar, or sand-bank, which stretches across the entrance, rendering it necessary for ships of heavy tonnage to complete their loading outside; an inconvenience, which is perhaps counterbalanced by advantages in other respects within the harbour, and the excellence of the holding ground in the outer anchorage.

Dr. Johnson says of Shakspeare that

"Panting Time toil'd after him in vain:"

but Shakspeare never visited the tropics, or he would have found it prodigious hot work even in keeping close at the heels of the old gentleman. For ourselves, we hold it to be inexpressibly tantalizing to be beforehand with him, and in having to wait in the middle of the night, without caring to strike off, by sleep, a nought in the sum total of existence, till the old curmudgeon overtakes you on the road, galivanting with Aurora. However, on the present occasion, we amused ourselves in giving details to the dark forms of the surrounding country, and in speculating, like Puck, upon the dreams of

the senseless sleepers that inhabited it, till daylight transferred us from the deck of the "Henry Freeling," to the best apartment that could be found for us, by a round-faced little body of mixed origin, named Kitty Lynch, who staked her reputation upon providing the most ample entertainment that could be found in any hotel in the Antilles. We will say nothing to her prejudice in the way of comparison.

There is a pure balmy mildness in the air of a tropical morning, even in a town, that at once dispels the languor of restlessness, and diffuses a buoyant elasticity into the spirit of man which is only to be gratified by activity. It is not the "bracing" freshness dispensed by a summer morning in colder regions, which in comparison may be said merely to thaw the blood, and to promote a turbid meandering through the veins, whilst the body still retains the flaky stiffness of ice floating above the current, but a genial glow pervades the whole system, inducing the most happy amalgamation of body and soul, and the intellects expand to their elasticity. A few bottles of oxygen gas produce the sort of sensation we allude to, and we

yielded to its influence by floating through the town before the sun became too warm, or the eye of curiosity too inquisitive to obstruct us in our inquiries.

Saint John's is situated on an inclined plane sloping towards the harbour. It is of considerable extent and well built, occupying a space of about three quarters of a mile in length from east to west, and about half a mile in breadth from north to south, the streets running in a transverse direction corresponding with the cardinal points. A few inconsiderable eminences lie in detached positions in the back-ground, and a rocky elevation, which protrudes into the upper limits of the town, whence the slope towards the sea commences, affords an eligible situation for its church, which is dedicated to Saint John; and the extensive view of the subjacent houses, the harbour, and shipping, and the various objects intervening with the verge of the horizon, embody an interesting picture. The streets are generally spacious, but so badly paved with small round-headed stones, that we marvel not at the doubt expressed by a recent visitor, whether a saint could walk to paradise if the road thither

were paved with the like of them. There are many well-built dwellings and extensive warehouses formed of stone, but most of the houses are of wooden construction, such as we have already described, having in most instances a projecting gallery in front, with Venetian blinds, or jallousies, as they are more commonly designated, but we found the same intrusion of small wooden tenements, noticed in our description of Basseterre at Saint Christopher's, some of them on wheels, like Pidcock's or Richardson's travelling vans, to destroy the regularity of the streets. A great convenience, nevertheless, to the tenants, in all questions of *ground-rent.*

Upon the whole we might rank Saint John's with Christianstadt at Santa Cruz, always excepting its pavements. Its church and court-house are unquestionably the most respectable specimens of architecture we had as yet seen. The former, although not particularly remarkable for elegance in external design, is a substantial well-built edifice, and its internal arrangements and decorations merit much commendation. An extensive burial-ground surrounds it, enclosed by a brick

wall with four entrance gates, the principal of which has on its pillars two well-executed figures of the Baptist and the Evangelist: and the court-house, which stands nearly in the centre of the town, is equally worthy of commendation for neatness and capacity. It is composed chiefly of stone brought from one of the numerous small islands which lie on the northern and eastern coast. The ground floor consists of a spacious hall for the administration of the laws, with appropriate offices attached, and extensive chambers for the accommodation of the legislative Council and Assembly, occupy the upper division of the building. The jail in the immediate vicinity could only be spoken of as a reproach to the colony. It consisted of a long stone building, of two stories, with galleries to admit of exercise in the shade, and there was a yard with a cistern and a well in it, but the whole affair was dirty, and dilapidated.

To the eastward of the town is a considerable tract of land, called Government ground, where the inhabitants of the metropolis and its neighbourhood, and the militia exercise; and where stand the ruins of extensive barracks and a military

hospital, the mere phantoms of what they have been, pointing to a distinct era in the history of the colony, and giving a sort of half-living aspect to surrounding objects. From the summit of a rocky elevation, among other inequalities that occur in Government ground, you obtain a fine view of the town and harbour—the principal place of trade, but the island boasts of several other smaller towns, and places for shipping.

We returned to the hotel, the only one in the town deserving notice, and that only from a superiority over a few grog-shops which have been so designated. The proverbial hospitality of a West Indian community operates materially to the prejudice of tavern keepers, and in some measure warrants the extravagant charges for what they term "accommodation," a dollar for a pair of shoe-strings to wit; an item we found insinuated into a bill, with the frequent enumeration of the same sum for other trifling commodities. The name of that abominable coin perpetually sounds in your ears, as the declared value of every insignificant article you need, and the no less abominable currency which differs in several of the islands, and the fluctuation of exchange, promote

a delusion over a novice in such matters, which, however plethoric he may be in pocket, imperceptibly reduce the system to the mere anatomy of good credit, when the leeches doubtless fall off. This said currency, which gives a nominal value of a hundred per cent. or so, above sterling; for instance, nine shillings to the dollar instead of four and sixpence; is apt to promote a vague impalpable influence upon the mind, which in the absence of positive conviction that your means are doubled, induces improvident outlay, under a fictitious valuation [1]. Why in the name of common sense is not the currency alike in all the islands, however their credit respectively might cause the *exchange* to vary?

"Come in!"—the door of our apartment opened. "How you do, Sir?—I hope you well, I call to pay my respects, and give you welcome to Antigua."

We were irresistibly impelled to inquire to whom we were indebted for so distinguished an honour, for although the person who addressed us

[1] In several islands there are 9*s*. currency to the dollar, in Barbadoes 6*s*. 3*d*. In Saint Vincent 10*s*.

wore a black skin, and white hair, without any deducible signs of rank about his person, this act of courtesy, combined with much polite see-sawism and scraping as he approached us, undoubtedly entitled him to the consideration due to a black prince, until the *éclaircissement* determined him to be only a black barber.

" My name's John Gordon, Sir—I very glad to be of service to you—I am the only barber in the town for gentlemen. I 'tend Government-house, I shave Colonel Ramsay, and Colonel Shiell, cut Colonel Horsford, dress the Governor—them are reg'lar customers, and I serve all other gentlemen in Saint John's. The last packet bring a strawdinary despatch to the Governor."—" Indeed !" we exclaimed, with some share of curiosity.—" Yes, Sir, Colonel Ramsay say such a thing never known, and Colonel Ramsay knows every thing, and can do every thing, he *can* shave himself, but he's nervous." " Well, well, but what of the extraordinary despatch ?"—" Yes, Sir, the Governor get a strawdinary Gazette from London by the last packet, it hab'nt one bankrupt in it."

We could not but smile at the importance of the

John Gordon,
of Antigua.

information, indicating, as it did, the extent of our informant's resources; he continued, "the governor be glad to see you, Sir—he's very nice man, every body like him, his lady too, every body like. She so good to the poor, I sorry you not come yesterday, Sir,—we have a grand day, the King's birth-day, the militia turn out, all the ladies on Government ground. The militia fired a *furious joy*, and a ball at Government-house in the evening."

Further intercourse with John Gordon satisfied us that few persons could have passed a week at Saint John's Antigua without becoming acquainted with so renowned a personage, unless perchance they eschewed shaving by deputy, or their craniological crop was not ripe for cutting. John Gordon was the "Truefit" of the island, we speak not in the literal sense, but comparatively, in reference to his great prototype of that name of Bond Street celebrity, and he moreover possessed all the sagacity of the Bath barber, who acquired great reputation for skill in his profession, by being always engaged if sent for, when in truth he had nothing to do—many have come to eminence by similar means.

John, however, owed some share of his popularity to the circumstance of his having no competitor in the immediate province of his practice; but the stepping-stone to his greatness, was unquestionably his great penetration in discovering a full knowledge of every body's affairs, and in promoting a fellow feeling in the community. He could ascertain the contents of the governor's despatches before they were opened, or within as short a period as might secure to him the credulity of those to whom he could in safety communicate the information they were supposed to contain. If he could not, so often as he wished, gain the confidence of the governor in person, he managed by his ingratiating manner to *scrape* acquaintance with one or other of his excellency's aides de camp, and being somewhat a politician and a prophet, he could make useful deductions from sidewind communications, or equivocal premises, which seldom failed to answer the calibre and comprehension of his numerous connexion. In this he was a skilful practitioner, for he studied with peculiar felicity the particular habits, as well as the interests, of those for whom he acted as a purveyor of intelli-

gence, and notwithstanding he occasionally prophesied things after they had happened, and made erroneous calculations as to particular results, he was to a certain extent, and among a certain class, looked upon as an oracle. John, however, had a patron and a powerful auxiliary in the person of one of the governor's aides de camp, a great quidnunc, alarmingly affected with the *cacoethes loquendi*, a perfect Isocrates in scandal and small talk, a great patron and promoter of pic-nics and marooning parties, always studious, and generally successful in creating discord and division in good-fellowship; a right valiant man in all colloquial contests,

> ——in logic a great critic,
> Profoundly skill'd in analytic,
> He could distinguish, and divide
> A hair 'twixt south and south-west side;
> On either which he would dispute,
> Confute, change hands, and still confute;

and no less eminent for tact in knocking down his adversary with the butt end of his pistol when he found it miss fire. With the softer sex he was the beau-ideal of a lady's man; he could draw patterns

for tambour work, possessed exquisite judgment in all matters of dress; a profundity of conundrums, enigmas, and riddles, and at all times had so much on his hands that he had not a moment to spare: *gratis anhelans, multa agendo nihil agens.*

Our hero of the razor naturally looked up to this great man as the fountain-head of wisdom, to which all resorted who were eager to allay their thirst in the stream that fertilizes envy, and generates detraction; and so copiously did he himself imbibe the refreshing draughts during his professional visits, and whenever opportunity offered, that like a lateral branch of a river by which redundancy is for awhile relieved, and which, after various windings returns with tributary streams to give fresh impetus to the main current; he carried off into his own channel copious supplies of information, and collected in his course fresh subjects for his patron to amplify. Ambitious of deriving importance from individuality, he kept the association as secret as he did the source of his acquired knowledge, and while people talked and wondered how such things were known, and gave *him* no credit in the cause, the master-spirit of

commotion remained a passive observer of its effects. This passion for scandal has been most shamefully attributed almost exclusively to the ladies, but we are happy in recording one prominent instance of it in man, and affirming from experience that it is by no means uncommon. We have another object in conveying this portraiture to our readers. One of the most striking peculiarities of a West Indian community is the familiarity of the negroes, whether bond or free, and the perfect nonchalance with which they seem to demand access to their superiors. John Gordon was by no means singular in evincing that independence which indicates indifference to the distinctions of rank, and even domestics, like old Hardcastle's servants, will laugh outright at your best jokes, and vociferate in ecstacy, "Massa, you really look well," if you happen to put on a new coat, or appear in the extraordinary embellishment of a field-day attire.

John Gordon at length became bewildered in the mazes of his popularity, and having quarrelled with a tailor, he was foolishly taught to believe that he had no other recourse to support his repu-

tation than that of meeting the belligerent in mortal combat, and both parties being screwed up to the same conviction, they took to the field like Trojans with loaded pistols. The tailor, impatient of victory, fired before the signal was given; the barber fell to the ground exclaiming, "oh, my brains, I'm a dead man;" the tailor bolted to the mountains to await a verdict, and John was borne from the field with due honours, to await his recovery, and to learn with mortified pride that the pistols had been loaded with current jelly. Poor fellow, we have heard that he has since been gathered unto his fathers; he died of the "dandy fever," an epidemic which prevailed in the island, and which derived its name from causing a stiff neck, and a swelling of the articulatory glands.

The only place of public amusement we could find in St. John's, if we except the court-house and the market-place, was a theatre, which was closed; but a performance by amateurs was seriously meditated, and nothing was wanting to bring it to an issue but two or three feminine males, and a few histrionic satellites to move in the orbit of the leading planets. Singular enough, all the

difficulty rested with the subordinate characters, in the performance of which, no one could be found that deemed himself capable of acquitting himself with credit,—" She Stoops to Conquer," had been selected for the occasion,—whilst aspirants for the leading personations were so numerous, that as *charity* was to dispense the receipts of the house, it was proposed, by way of novelty, to perform the play thrice in one night, by introducing triplicate performers on the stage at the same time. Here, however, the difficulty was increased; the committee of management failed in enlisting even *one* complete set of underlings, and the play had probably been d——d in embryo, but for the fortunate suggestion that the character of Aminadab should be engrafted on that of Diggory, in order to give it ascititious value, and make it worthy the genius of the artist; and that those who should personate the inferior domestics in old Hardcastle's establishment, should form the drinking party and chorus at the sign of " The Three Pigeons." This was consistent with real life. At length matters were finally arranged, and as the dramatis personæ appeared less perfect in their parts at each succeeding

rehearsal, it was resolved that the performance should take place before they had entirely forgotten them. The night arrived,

> The parts were ready, just as they were cast,
> The house was crowded to an overflow;
> The lamps shone out, so did the fiddlers too,
> Tinkled the bell, and up the curtain flew.

But it received a check in its progress about three feet from the stage, which for a few moments puzzled the artificers behind the scenes—astonished the audience in front, and induced Mrs. Hardcastle, who had lucklessly stationed *himself* at the hole in the curtain to ascertain the "strength of the house," to vociferate most lustily, "d—n it, let go;"—the audience roared with laughter—some hissed, others applauded, the man at the pulleys continued to pull —Mrs. Hardcastle resisted with both hands—the prompter cast an inquiring look on the stage, and finally, the curtain was lowered to release the garments of the mortified actor, which had been enveloped in the ascending drapery. The delicate susceptibility of the lady was soon overcome, and the play proceeded with considerable spirit. Toney, at least, *looked* his character to admiration, and whenever his memory failed him his wits filled up

the *hiatus*, alike regardless of the prompter's assistance, or of the *cue* required by his colleagues: but the pantomime was the novelty of the evening; a species of performance of rare occurrence, although admirably adapted to the taste and temperament of a tropical audience. It was called "Harlequin Planter, or the land of *Promise*;" and there was no lack of whimsical transformations to give it all the interest which this species of representation usually embodies. It opened with the representation of an island inhabited by aboriginal savages, who were living upon such good terms with the Dryades, that they were enjoying a pastoral dance together, in which the whole forest formed part of the *corps de ballet*, and a few pet crocodiles were the admiring audience. The party was here interrupted in the pastime by the appearance of some adventurous settlers, who immediately subjected the savages to the yoke of servitude—the trees went into deep mourning on the occasion, and the work of clearing the land commenced amidst thunder and lightning, and earthquakes, which eventually frightened every one from the scene of action but a determined old colonist, who, after bringing the crocodiles to

obedience, proceeded to fell a large tree. The tree at length gave way to the axe, affording an appropriate entrance for *Maboya*, the evil spirit of the natives, who after an appropriate recitative address which demanded the sacrifice of so many of the savages as a quit-rent for the proprietary of the island, proceeded to transform to harlequin, the astonished wood-cutter, and to endow him with the powers of magic. The influence of Maboya was at this juncture rendered partially ineffective by the agency of an opposing spirit, for instead of the transformation taking effect as intended, only the checquered legs of Harlequin appeared beneath a mass of dark coloured drapery, which, as he ascended many feet above the stage, formed in confused folds about his body, whilst the voice of the manager behind the scenes vociferated lustily "Let go, let go." Maboya had disappeared in evident displeasure, without offering further aid, and the semi-metamorphose descended again to the stage in a lump, and with such tremendous force that nothing short of supernatural agency could have prevented broken limbs. The curtain dropped for a few moments to allow the musicians to recover harmony; the audi-

ence to get the better of their fears, and harlequin to regain his self-possession. The cause of this episode was as follows: the outer habiliments of the wood cutter were in two distinct parts, kept together by strings which proceeded through holes from the bottom of the legs up each side, and communicating by a hook with a rope at the back of the neck, intended to remove, with magical quickness, the outer garb at the moment of transformation, when the smaller strings should yield to the pull of three or four underlings behind the scenes. Unfortunately, however, the embryo harlequin had fastened the strings at the bottom, to enable him to move about with greater facility, until the time for his appearance should arrive, when he forgot to unloose them—and no sooner was the signal given which was to allow him to glide instantaneously into his new character, than instead of skipping about, and commencing the harlequinade, he found himself kicking his heels high in the air. The curtain rose again, harlequin reappeared, the crocodiles disgorged a pantaloon and a clown, whom they had swallowed too hastily to digest, and a columbine was found in

the person of a fair caribbess, who suddenly became enamoured of the variegated tattooing on the agile limbs of her paramour.

The proem having thus terminated, the performance proceeded glibly enough: the agents of the thumping and tumbling departments were tolerably *au fait* in personating the ascititious characters of lawyers, doctors, and planters, and the machinery appeared to yield with intuitive submission to the magical influence of the wand in transforming trees into houses and windmills, and the natives, by the process of grinding, into hogsheads of sugar. Harlequin at length failing in his contract to Maboya, the demon is about to deprive him of his power, and the proprietary of the island, but he is appeased upon receiving, at the suggestion of the clown, who acts as legal adviser, a *promissory* note bearing interest. This matter being settled, various expedients are suggested to meet the obligation, and a laughable scene transpires, in which harlequin endeavours to infuse promethean heat into a number of ludicrous figures made of clay; the thing of course fails, Maboya is again and again pacified upon the renewal of

the security with additional interest, and the first act concludes with harlequin proceeding with columbine on a voyage to Africa on the back of a crocodile, which for the sake of better accommodation, is changed into a ship. The second act commences with the return of the voyagers and a cargo of negroes, enabling harlequin for some time to support his credit with Maboya; but Astræa, the goddess of justice, at length interposes, attended by several staid straight-haired gentry, bearing the banners of the Anti-Slavery Society, one of whom acts as spokesman in announcing her purpose to revoke the contract with Maboya, and to enforce submission from harlequin by reading aloud certain resolutions passed in convocation by the ladies of Peckham and Clapham, of which the most startling to the anxious listeners is their determination to abstain from the use of sugar.—A tremendous peal of thunder accompanies this awful announcement. Boots and shoes, skaites, razors and looking-glasses are now distributed by the reverend suite, to the negroes, whose misconception and perverse misapplication of their uses are preposterously absurd. One fellow, eager to get on a pair of boots,

puts a razor in each loop to serve as boot hooks, and discovers with horror, that the blades being forced through the back of the handles, have nearly severed his fingers: another, at first delighted with a looking-glass, after gazing in disappointment for the figure which he imagined to be looking from behind it, throws the bauble at the head of Astræa, in missing which it passes directly to the erubescent nose of a saintly looking personage in her train. Harlequin at length refuses to yield obedience to the goddess, whom he detects as an impostor, and resorts to the power of his wand, upon which Astræa herself appears, who commands the whole of the negroes to be *whitewashed* in order to make them unacceptable to Maboya, whose power is limited to the destinies of the coloured race. At this juncture harlequin's promissory notes become due, are noted and protested for non-payment, all in the twinkling of an eye. The Demon creditor is inexorable, and manifests his vengeance by stirring up an earthquake, with terrific thunder and lightning; the winds *hurry canes* in all directions about the stage, in order to give the tempest its proper definition, and all is confusion and uproar; the *white* negroes are frantic

in their liberty, Astræa gets upset in the confusion, and puts to sea in a cock-boat—all the colonists are knocked on the head, the island resumes its original state of nature, and upon the clearing up of a *mist*, which for a moment obscures the scenery, a room at the Colonial Office in Downing Street is introduced, and the curtain falls as the Secretary of State in his arm chair is seen awaking from the dream which is supposed to have embodied all the pantomimic details.

The audience, white, yellow, and black, freemen and slaves, were all vastly delighted, and notwithstanding the price of admission was high—namely, Boxes 18*s*. Pit 13*s*. 6*d*. Gallery 9*s*. currency, the house was crowded in every part. The proceeds were distributed in charity by the lady patroness, who, as well as the governor, was ever active in dispensing benefits herself, and in promoting the benevolent sympathies of others in behalf of the necessitous and indigent inhabitants.

We found Government-house in a cool and pleasant situation in the north-eastern limit of the town. It is a commodious agreeable dwelling, superior, indeed, to most of the residences provided

for the governors in these islands—and if a liberal policy combined with a persevering integrity in the discharge of his duties, an amiability of disposition and manners, and open-hearted hospitality, make a governor esteemed, Sir Berjamin D'Urban well merited the popularity he enjoyed. The Antigonians, or as Mr. Coleridge has it, the Antiguans, were no less fortunate in his immediate successor Sir Patrick Ross. This colony has, indeed, been singularly happy in having men of intelligence and character to administer its internal government, whose jurisdiction has at the same time extended to the other Leeward Islands. One lamentable instance of the contrary, which, whether proceeding from the existence of party feuds among the inhabitants at the time, and a restless and impatient spirit under control, or a peculiarity in the disposition of the man, will be more fully noticed in our historical sketch.

Not only has this island been less subjected to invasion, and all the consequent casualties of warfare, than any other colony in these seas, Barbadoes only excepted, but it appears to have enjoyed greater freedom from domestic dissension, and a

more general diffusion of intelligence among the leading members of its community, promoting a greater degree of social order, and a stronger bond of union, than have generally existed among the inhabitants of the neighbouring British islands. Upon the whole the society here was upon a very creditable footing. Resident proprietors were more numerous, and the softer sex, without whom a community represents merely the raw material of society, the unpolished setting, in which the precious jewels should be mounted, were very prettily interfused in the social compact. *Apropos* we have said nothing as yet of the Antillian ladies, but our silence is no reproach by implication upon their many endearing qualities.—No, we

> " ———venerate a petticoat,
> A garment of a mystical sublimity,
> No matter whether russet, silk, or dimity."

The truth is, we entertain a sort of religious veneration for the name of woman, especially associated with all the purity of adolescent virtue. A spiritual vibration moves within us at the sound, to which we could never find words to accord, and with such tenacity have we always held common-

place hyperbole in its praise, to be profanation of the only idol on which we are allowed to place our affections, that we have literally passed the poetical era of our life, a martyr to our creed, because we could never frame a sentence for fair lady's ear, that would harmonize with the elevation of our thoughts, or that might not be mistaken for extravagant eulogy.

Verily, ye fair daughters of the British Antilles, we might indeed say much in commendation of your manifold virtues; of your kind and affectionate hearts, which, like the sensitive mimosa, are ever susceptible of the slightest touch: we might, too, lament the non-intervention of a gynecocracy among those of you who have siamesed the genders in the delectable state of matrimony, that species of legislation which adjusts the balance in the affairs of life, vindicates the "rights of woman," and gives to ladies of our colder climes that imperious dignity, which too often, alas! breaks down the boundaries prescribed in the "rights of man," and makes vassals of their uxorious lords. They are

> "So gentle, charming, charitable, chaste,
> And all by having *tact* as well as taste."

Certain it is, that petticoat government with *you*, appears to have yielded, without the voice of your constituents, to a sort of pagan indifference whether you have souls or not—and we admit that you have, and you allow many of your amiable qualities, designed by nature for active intervention, to be neutralized by an endemial languor, which robs your fair cheeks of the bloom of health, and obscures the brightness and intelligence of your inward excellence.

The fresh and glowing forms of the sunny isles you inhabit, repose in placid calmness on ocean's downy couch, but they are no less glorious when lowering amidst the elemental strife of hurricanes and earthquakes, or when they manifest in wrath the intestine fires which live within them.

The enervating influence of the climate upon your fair forms, doubtless disposes you to pass your lives in one continual *siesta*, but the disposition is superinduced by voluntary submission to its power, by the force of example in the neglect of attainable exercise, the transfer of those domestic duties which strictly belong to the station of a wife and a mother, to a superproportion of indolent domestics, who are

mostly unwilling to allow the demands upon their industry to interfere with their aping the inertness and independent bearing of their mistresses. The number of servants, both male and female, in most respectable establishments, whether in town or country, appears quite ludicrous to a new comer; and their impudence is so intense, their indolence, particularly with the women, so irresistibly amusing, and the climate so hot, that you cannot find it in your heart to be out of temper with them till they become absolutely outrageous. We have often smiled in paying a visit, at seeing, perhaps, half a dozen of them through a door-way leading to another room, or an open yard, amusing themselves with a monkey, or a child, or a tortoise, or listening to one of them playing the jew's harp, whilst their master or mistress has been calling for them by name in rotation, without one of them answering, until that indiscriminate word, "somebody," demanded a response, upon the assumption that among so many retainers, there should be somebody to answer; and it is not sufficient that your personal servant should attend you to a party, but, if the distance admits of it, it is a chance if your

house is not deserted by the whole body, that they may share in the festivity which they never fail to have among themselves. They are not only great gossipers, but the most indefatigable listeners, and second and third editions of the conversational or polemical part of their superiors' repast, passes among them with greater rapidity than the Courier newspaper reiterates the same information. But of the married ladies: one crying evil is their disdaining to suckle their offspring, resigning them almost entirely to the care of a negro or mulatta wet-nurse, from which they may not only engender some latent malady, but as soon as they can lisp, they insensibly acquire that drawling dissonant gibberish, that awkward carriage, and vulgar manner, which a few years at an English boarding-school often fail totally to overcome. The consequence is, that mothers too often adopt the same abominable elongated sentences, to suit the comprehension of their children, until they as insensibly interweave it, in their ordinary manner of speaking. Pardon us, dear ladies, for uttering a word to your discredit, but we would not see a blemish on such fair models of purity,

without lending our aid in wiping off the deformity.

The great lack of amusement, and the influence of climate upon the human frame, must of consequence produce that languor and inertness so common with the people in these islands. The chitchat of a morning call, an occasional marooning, or gipsying party, a dinner congregation with a quadrille finale, constitute all that is spirit-stirring among them, and these owe their frequency to the peculiar disposition and means, and the quantum of good-fellowship prevailing in each community. It has, indeed, been too commonly imagined that an uniformity exists in the aspect of West Indian societies, and that a description of one might serve for the whole; this is, however, to be admitted so far only as regards the component parts, consisting of officers of the government, resident proprietors, persons of the law, physic, and divinity, planters, and merchants, but although the elements of the social code may be the same in character, they are not in corresponding proportions, and the physical construction of the islands causing the means of communication and intercourse to be more or less

favourable, in no slight degree interpose in affording the analogy alluded to. Better forms of government, and better institutions, derived from the steady purpose, the constant and persevering energy of enlightened minds, and the force of example, be the community however small, must inevitably depend upon the proportion and *duration* of the intelligence moving within it, exhibiting its palpability, and enlarging its bounds, as the expanding circle on the placid bosom of a lake derives its magnitude from the weight of the pebble that occasions it. Hence also, combined with other causes, is a very distinct difference perceptible in the moral feelings, the habits and general character of the slave population in the different islands, and which have presented obstacles of a more formidable character, than have been generally apprehended, to that happy change in the legal condition of the negroes, which is contemplated by the recent resolutions of the Imperial Parliament.

> " We will debate this matter at more leisure,
> And teach thy ears to listen with more heed."

CHAPTER XXV.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ISLAND. — GEOLOGICAL CHARACTER. — ROADS. — JOHN BOTT. — HUCKSTERING. — MARKETS. — PROVERBS.—TRAFFIC OF THE NEGROES.—PROVISION GROUNDS.—A FIRE. — NEGROES' HOUSES. — ANECDOTES. — JOHN SMITH, ALIAS CÆSAR.—NEGRO SOIREES.—QUALITY BALLS.

" For just experience tells, in every soil,
That those who think must govern those that toil;
And all that Freedom's highest aims can reach,
Is but to lay proportion'd loads on each."

GOLDSMITH.

THE extent of the island is estimated at about 69,000 acres or 108 square miles in an area of about 18 miles in length, and 14 miles in breadth, in the form of an irregular oval, indented on all sides by harbours, bays and creeks, with several small islands, particularly on the northern and eastern coasts, which, with numerous shoals and sunken rocks, have been not unjustly considered its best defence against an invading enemy. With the exception of a range of mountains in the southern and south-western quarters, the highest of which

is not more than 1500 feet above the level of the sea, the island exhibits chiefly a level and well cultivated surface, interrupted only by hills of slight elevation, and broken ground and water-courses. It is true, it presents none of those bold and picturesque features which characterize most of the neighbouring colonies, but it is by no means destitute of scenery of attractive beauty; and notwithstanding the reputation it has of being an unseasonable and adust spot,

> ———" Whose fields and pastures large,
> No latent spring, or limpid brook revives,"

few persons could visit it without being agreeably surprised at beholding the extensive fields of sugar-canes and green pasture lands which stretch over the largest portion of the country. The very remarkable difference, however, in the annual crops of sugar, which have varied from 8000 to 27,000 hogsheads, at once attests the uncertainty of the seasons, and the prevalence of excessive droughts. So serious, indeed, has been the distress occasioned by the want of water, that it has been brought from the neighbouring islands at a great expense, and as

much as three shillings has been given for a pail-ful from a cistern, and rum and wine have been given in exchange. In 1779, so severe a drought prevailed over the island, that every part became parched, and all the pools were dry. The importation of water was insufficient to meet the demand. Negroes and stock perished in the greatest agony, and a malignant fever, at the same time, threatened destruction to all. The crop of sugar in this year amounted to only 3,382 hogsheads and 579 tierces. Again in 1789, for seven months no rain fell on the island, and 5000 head of horned cattle are said to have perished from want of water. These serious evils have occasioned the construction of public ponds, and every estate has a stone tank to receive the rain-water. Several springs, yielding excellent water, are, however, to be found in different parts of the island, particularly in the mountainous districts.

Antigua presents a remarkable peculiarity in its natural formation; affording, perhaps, a more interesting field for geological research, than any similar tract of country as yet described. It admits of four distinct classifications. The range of moun-

GEOLOGICAL MAP OF
ANTIGUA.
1 2 3
British Miles.
ST JOHNS
St Johns Har
Parham
Five Island H.
Body Ponds
Norsuch H.
Willoughby Bay
Falmouth
English H.
Marl
Chert
Conglomer
Trap

tains in the south-western quarters, consists of unstratified conglomerate, composed of masses of trap breccia, wacké porphyry, green-stone, &c. which are embedded in a clay matrix, with brownish decomposing chlorite baldagé. Parallel with this range inland, a different formation appears, consisting of a claystone conglomerate, containing silicified wood, coralline chert, agate, amygdaloid, porphyry slate, bloodstone, &c. the matrix of which, though for the most part similar to that of the mountain range, is frequently more compact, and of an intense green colour, from the greater impregnation or diffusion of green earth. The northern and eastern districts, comprising about one half the island, are composed of a peculiar calcareous formation more recent than those to which the attention of naturalists has been principally directed. The general outline of these calcareous beds is extremely broken and undulated, and the infinite number of fragments of lime-stone, containing a considerable variety of fossil shells, nodules of calcareous spar, and small patches and druses of cellular and crystallized quartz, &c. must have considerably embarrassed the early cultivators of the land, and in

many parts to windward, they have been formed with great labour into walls of inclosures. A smooth grained, pale, yellowish free-stone, composed of siliceous particles, carbonate of lime, and a little oxyde of iron, is contained in this marl formation, and it may be found also in the small islands on the north-eastern coast. Subordinate to the lowest beds of this calcareous formation, and nearly in the centre of the island, are extensive irregular masses of coarse chert, containing a prodigious quantity of casts of shells, chiefly cerithia, and at the church-hill at Saint John's, which stands on a patch of chert, with marl enveloping it, there are beautiful casts in flint of ramose madreporites, conchs, cockles, and other shells, both univalve and bivalve. The island abounds with siliceous and agatized fossils, particularly in the calcareous districts, which are remarkable for their great variety and beauty when polished.

Dr. Nugent, a member of the geological society, to whom we are indebted for the foregoing particulars, has written an interesting account of the geology of Antigua[1]. He is a resident proprietor

[1] Geological Transactions, Vol. v.

in the island, and one whose active and intelligent mind, and gentlemanly deportment, do honour to the community in which he moves.

The island is divided into six parishes, or fifteen divisions, each of the latter sending one or two members to the assembly, in addition to four members which are returned for the town of Saint John. His Majesty's Council consists of sixteen members, who are either appointed by the crown, or nominated by the governor, being subject to confirmation from England. The population of the island is about 2000 whites, 5000 coloured and black in a state of freedom, and about 30,000 slaves; an effective militia is embodied consisting of a brigade of artillery, a squadron of light dragoons, and two regiments of infantry.

The very open character of the county, compared with the neighbouring islands, affords greater facility of communication, and a more extended range of observation—the vivid colouring of the checquered cane-fields, the number of windmills and dwellings, and the various signs of active industry comprehended within any one view, present a striking contrast to the scenery to which the eye

becomes accustomed in the other islands, whose high mountains cast a variety of shadows over the landscape, and attract the clouds, which diffuse with their frequent showers a fresher and more exhilarating hue throughout varied vegetation. It is only in the mountainous district of this island, whose greatest elevation is insignificant compared with the towering pinnacle of Mount Misery at Saint Christopher's, and the "cloud-capped" ridges of some of the islands to the southward, that the scenery bears any analogy to that which such inequalities of surface and soil are calculated to produce. The interior of the island is, however, not destitute of several hills of sufficient elevation to afford agreeable situations for some of the planters' dwellings, and to relieve a monotonous uniformity which the face of the country would otherwise wear. The sugar cane, indeed, presents such a continuity of green and yellow, of various shades, from the light grassy sprout when it first emerges from the ground, to the rich deep russet tint of the ripe plant, that but for those inequalities, and the intervening ploughed fields and fallow and pasture lands, and the circuitous water-courses and broken

ground, which checquer and intersect the extended plains, the eye would feel oppressed in contemplating the vividness of the scenery through the broad glare of a tropical sun. The general aspect of the country reminded us of Santa Cruz,—but how is it the Antiguans do not emulate the Santa Cruzians in their roads? With all the manifest facilities, and abundant materials which they possess, their highways are infinitely inferior to those in the Danish colony. Their plans are well enough conceived, the roads are well laid out, and waywardens have the surveillance of the districts, with power to require assistance from each estate, but here there is a prodigious long pause:—a practical system is wanting, such as MacAdam, that Colossus of Rhodes[1], would introduce; and more particularly an uncompromising energy of purpose, that does not stop to deliberate whether Mr. A, may take offence at being called upon for his portion of labour, because his carts do not travel over the roads as often as those of Mr. B, or because Mr. C, uses broader wheels, or whether Mr. D. happen to send

[1] Query—Roads? Printer's devil.

his hogsheads of sugar to the shipping place in droghers[1]. Unfortunately, public expediency, too frequently interferes with private convenience, causing many, who may be ready to acknowledge the principle of its adoption, either to desire to apportion their own responsibility, or to manifest impatience at the obligation. Hence arises one of the most crying evils, which these small communities heedlessly inflict upon themselves, that of allowing political and official opinions and measures, to form the substratum of rancour and party feeling in their domestic and social relations, inducing many men of intelligence, either to exercise a false delicacy in the performance of their duties, or wholly to avoid any participation in promoting, by their services, the public welfare.

If ever thou hast, dear reader, inflicted misery upon thyself by travelling in a Russian *kibitka*, thou mayest imagine a species of experimental

[1] Droghers are small vessels that are employed to convey from the different bays on the coast to the shipping, the produce of those estates that are more distant from the ports of entry, thereby avoiding long and tedious cartage, which does so much injury to the cattle, and affords negroes on the road an opportunity of riding to increase the labour of the animals.

A John Bott.

Antigua

purgatory invented by one John Bott, an Antiguan manufacturer of chaises, whose sapient mind, profoundly diligent in affording security against broken necks, hath imposed torture as a merciful equivalent upon all who adopt his vehicle for a conveyance, the incidental thumps and bumps and bruises, being a happy commutation for the penalty of walking under a hot sun. It has, not inaptly, been compared to the upper moiety of a sentry-box, clapped bodily upon, or rather *before* two gig-wheels, which said wheels, to provide against an upset, are placed as far behind the body as practicable, that the centre of gravity may rest between them and the animal—a very clever notion—and if you happen to be bulky in your proportions, have a negro by your side as a *wedge* to avoid friction—we got the idea from a quondam friend in the island—you will thereby favour the design of the inventor by increasing the draught of the horse as much as possible—but for ourselves, we would rather ride a trotting-match mounted on a dray-horse, than again travel from Saint John's to Montpelier in one of them, behind an American cat-hammed quadruped, whose volition indicated a desire to

get a-head of himself in dragging the machine over a stony road; and so "fifty-one thousand black angels," as said the choleric Manchegan, and since reiterated by that facetious expositor of tropical miseries, Mr. Coleridge, "seize the guilty idolon of John Bott, and trot him into madness in one of his own creations on the stoniest roads of Tartarus!" He has left his name entailed upon his inhuman invention.

The level character of the country admits of the use of every description of carriage; and there is a very creditable display of barouches, calèches, tilburies, and stanhopes. The use of the plough too, which, in the more mountainous islands is in great measure rendered impracticable, was here very generally adopted.

In none of the other colonies we had visited, was the number of negroes on the highways so conspicuous as they appeared in Antigua, certainly they were more open to observation, but a lengthened residence in the island gave us further explanation. Vast quantities of vegetables and live stock, are reared on many estates by the attornies and managers, and conveyed by the negroes to

town for sale. We doubt, indeed, whether in any island, huckstering is carried to a greater extent than in Antigua, to the manifest injury of the owners of estates, who consequently have the labour of the negroes thus employed, diverted from their plantation duties, and a jealous feeling excited among the others, who reasonably imagine that their labour is consequently increased. Nor is this species of traffic confined to live stock and vegetables; invoices of cloth and linen, tapes, thread, and needles, and a variety of such notions, are procured from England, and sold upon this plan, wherever purchasers are to be procured, female slaves generally being appointed to act as itinerant purveyors. Besides the negroes so employed as agents, many are to be seen proceeding to town on their own account. These mostly consist of votaries of Deverra, who have acquired a name which we cannot find it in our hearts to write, and whose state of pregnancy exempt them from their plantation duties, as well as those who have children at the breast; but they are nevertheless to be seen carrying on their heads heavy loads of vegetables and fruit, perhaps a distance of seven or eight

miles to the market-place [1]. The principal, or weekly market, which was held at this time on Sundays, is near the southern entrance to Saint John's, where the slaves of every description assembled, and where the gratification of their vanity in the display of their finery was no inconsiderable incentive to their congregating, as well as the more ostensible motive of traffic—and what with the jabbering of their voices, the noise of pigs, goats, and poultry, and the compound animal and vegetable odours, the whole thing was enough to confound the senses of any man that had not become familiar with such an

[1] The regulations respecting pregnant women and "nurses," *i. e.* those recently confined, vary in a trifling degree on different estates: but the most material provisions are the same. They are placed to lighter work as soon as they report themselves pregnant, and for three months previous to their lying-in, and for two months after, they are totally exempt from work. At the latter period, they resume their duties an hour later, and quit them an hour earlier than the rest of the field negroes, until their infants are weaned, relieving each other in attending to their children, who occupy a shady spot as near to them as practicable. The additional allowances that came more immediately under our observation were as follow: the mother received sufficient ticking for a bed and pillow, a wrapper, two caps, six napkins, and, four weeks after safe delivery, one dollar, besides such nourishment as the midwife required, who also received a dollar if the child survived its birth. A lying-in establishment and a hospital are common on every estate.

ordeal. And then their jeers and jokes upon those who happen to be better dressed than themselves, or whose pig is more sleek than their own—their semi-civilized proverbs and quaint sententious remarks, accompanied by gesticulations which seem appertinent to the same ideas, are all so exquisitely ludicrous, that we defy the most saturnine temper not to be tickled by risible emotion. "Eh, me Gad! look da!" they will say, upon seeing a negro wench who has exchanged her working attire for a muslin or cambric frock—"aw nebber see de like —aw reälly gran—cockaw-benny tun a yellah tail[1]!"—and if the lady happen to evince more than ordinary pride, or contempt, she will probably hear, by way of reproach, "Nawngaw mek kraub no hab no head"—pride was the cause of crabs having no heads—a saying, which among themselves admits of this exposition: that when all animals were called together to receive their heads, the crabs were so proud of their walk, so different from other creatures, that they continued walking

[1] "Look there! I never see the like—I really grand—a cockaw-benny," a small coarse fish which the negroes despise, "has turned a yellow-tail," a large beautiful fish held in great esteem.

backward and forward to show those that were passing and re-passing their elegant steps, and this they continued so long, that when they applied for their heads, they were all gone.-And if, perchance, in barter among themselves, they imagine the proposed bargain to be against them, they will observe with peculiar archness of expression, "ĕh, ĕh, you tink me foŏl?—aw sabbey berry well—dat time de cockroach hab dance, him no hax fowl fu cum da[1]."

It must occur to the mind of every reader, that the similarity of their legal condition, and, to a great extent, of their habits, their constant and immediate contact, materially promoted by their forming connexions on distant estates, and their insatiable love of gossip, promote, if not a common sympathy among them, that general interest in all their relations, which at once establishes a familiarity, un-

[1] "You think me a fool, eh?—I understand very well, that time the cockroaches have a dance, they dont ask fowls to come there;" for the obvious reason, that the fowls would devour the dancing gentry. The negroes have been known to make a more pertinent application of this proverb, which is worthy of becoming a standing maxim in more refined society, not to encourage or invite those persons, the sole object of whose visits is to eat and drink, and who would devour their host if they could.

known among a free peasantry, whose state of dependence, and whose perceptions and physical character are less uniform. One negro will seldom meet another on the road, even if he have no immediate knowledge of him, without stopping to speak, or in passing, exchanging a salutation, and they invariably pay respect to old age [1].

These circumstances, combined with a total abstraction from those domestic cares which are known to spring from a state of existence that gives no surety for to-morrow, from those fearful speculations upon fortuitous occurrences, which mark the lives of free labourers in other countries, together with that inexplicable confusion of essences which ever appears to be working in their pericranium, as their untutored perceptions expand to the light of reason, cause that reckless spirit, those perpetual sparkles of energy and hardihood, which so strikingly mark the character of the negroes in

[1] The relative family names among them are, *old granta*, grandmother; *old daddy*, grandfather; *daddy*, father; *mammy*, mother; *sissy*, sister; *buddy*, brother; *unco*, uncle; *anté*, aunt. All of these names; excepting the two last, are frequently applied to each other, as a mark of respect, according to their relative ages, without regard to consanguinity.

these islands, whenever seen in unrestrained intercourse or open collision among themselves.

The distance of the markets from the points whence many of them have to carry their provisions, with the heavy loads they have to convey under a hot sun, has been represented over and over again, as one of the innumerable hardships which they have to endure, abridging the brief respite allowed them from plantation labour on Sundays, and the few hours which might be devoted to religious worship[1]. Of the Sunday markets alone, we most cordially join in the well-merited reprehension that has been passed upon them; but we deny the inference that is to be drawn from the context of the statement. The gregarious inclinations of the negroes, their ungovernable love of hearing themselves talk, of bartering the gossip of the country for that of the town, and of vieing with each other in the display of their holiday garments, carry them with joyous hearts to the point where they may best gratify their propensities, and

[1] In all these colonies, the Sunday markets have, within the last few years, been either wholly abolished, or restricted to ten and eleven o'clock in the morning.

where they may be said literally to burst with the accumulated anticipations of the week, and to run riot in an uncontrolable *ad libitum* of thought, word, and action. The quantity of live stock, consisting of pigs, goats, turkeys, geese, ducks, Guinea-birds, and the common fowls, owned by the negroes in the several islands we had visited, was a cause of reasonable surprise and gratulation; the pigs and goats alone being restricted from a free range over the estates, owing to their destructive and mischievous propensities, and on some properties, the latter are wholly interdicted [1]. In the rearing of turkeys, the negroes are not so successful as with other feathered stock, but occasionally a large flock is seen in a piece of land newly turned up, feeding upon the slugs and worms with peculiar *gusto;* and the ducks and fowls are regular visitors at the stables, and feeding-troughs of the horses, which are usually placed near the door of the pro-

[1] We really see nothing very arbitrary or cruel in such a restriction. "It is common in the islands," says Mr. Stephen, "to prevent the raising and owning of certain articles of *agricultural* produce, lest a dishonest traffic might be carried on by the slaves." What are these *certain* articles but the staple commodities, such as sugar, coffee, &c.?

prietor's or manager's dwelling, as a necessary security that the quadrupeds get their feed, which would inevitably be diminished, if the discretion of the negro groom was allowed to estimate the profit between his poultry and his master's horses. Notwithstanding the huckstering propensities in this island—and it is not uncommon in the other colonies, most of the proprietors and attornies depend solely upon the supply of the markets, or upon such of the negroes who will be their purveyors; but a desire to carry their stock to market, and to conceal from the white people on the estate, their immediate means of making money, often induces the negroes to decline selling a fowl or a duck, by framing some excuse, or denying that they own any. On such occasions they will say, "Him too ñoung fu kill, or him too ole fu kill, aw keep him fu breed"—or, "him no 'blong me, him 'blong me granny"—or, perhaps, like the eleventh duckling, which Dr. Johnson, when a boy honoured with an epitaph—"aw keep him fu luck, him odd un[1];" innumerable instances

[1] "Here lies good master duck,
Whom Samuel Johnson trod on,
Had he liv'd, it had been *good luck*,
For then we'd had an *odd one*."—*Boswell's Life.*

of the kind passed under our observation during a residence of nearly two years in this island. In short, a negro on our West Indian plantations, is seldom deficient in sagacity on any occasion, in which his interest or his inclinations are concerned. Their private provision grounds, besides any waste land about the estate, which they are usually allowed to cultivate, are mostly laid out in squares of about forty feet for each individual, and are situated as near to their habitations as circumstances will admit. The chequered combination of these allotments presents rather a singular effect, especially when placed on a hill side, or seen from a neighbouring eminence, a fallow or neglected piece, almost invariably pointing out the negro to whom it belongs, as an indolent and depraved character. So little time and attention are required to make these plots of ground productive and profitable to the cultivator, that any palpable neglect, is next in effect to total abandonment. In the neighbourhood of the towns and villages which are situated on the coast, the neglect of these grounds is more remarkable, partly owing to the decidedly unfavourable difference in the moral condition of the

slaves, from their associating, as often as possible, with the free negroes of the towns, whence they too frequently acquire habits of drunkenness and profligacy, which are less frequent among the slaves in the interior of the country, and partly from their possessing other means of making money. The wild grass and weeds, which abound in the waste and fallow lands and cane-pieces, are collected and sold in bundles to the town-residents for their horses and goats, and on those estates bounding the sea-coast, they have the advantage of an abundant supply of fish which they catch in baskets.

The negroes appear to acknowledge no right on the part of the owner of the estate to any thing it produces, beyond the *staple* commodities, with this essential reservation in their own favour, that the dishonesty of purloining even those articles as opportunity offers, consists only in the *detection*. It is true, that the superabundance of vegetables they rear for their own consumption, and for the markets, occasionally secures to the white people on the estate, the privilege of rearing them for themselves; but fruit seldom remains in undisturbed possession of the proprietor without great precau-

tion and vigilance being adopted if he happen to care about it, which is seldom the case; they will either take it with the most barefaced effrontery, or steal it, if interdicted. Coco-nuts, for instance, which are produced on most estates, are commonly considered among them a sort of prescriptive right, and they gather them in the green state for the markets, where they are sold for the refreshing draughts they afford.

These facts convey a tolerable idea of the extent of a negroe's means of making money and acquiring property; but we will so far enlarge upon them as to give the most ordinary prices obtained in this island for the articles they carry to market, which differ very little from those in the other colonies.

The common price paid for a bundle of grass, which they carry to town after their plantation labour ceases—and many of the residents contract for a regular supply—is four *dogs*, and on a wet night they will demand as much as twelve dogs, or two *bits*. We have frequently met as many as six, eight, and ten negroes in a group, proceeding to town with bundles of grass on their heads, so large as nearly to conceal their persons. Each of these

bundles is commonly divided into four or six of those usually sold at four *dogs*, which, for each negro, at the lowest computation, is equal to sixteen dogs, or two shillings *currency* a night, or seven shillings *sterling* a week. Pork is sold at one and half *bit* the pound; a roasting pig about six weeks old, a dollar, or 9*s.*; turkey-cocks, 13*s.* 6*d.* to 18*s.*; turkey-hens, 9*s.*; capons, 6*s.* to 9*s.*; guinea-birds and ducks, 4*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.*; chickens, 2*s.* to 2*s.* 3*d.*; rabbits, four to five bits; eggs, three bits a dozen. The green, or "jelly coco-nuts," are sold at two and three dogs each. Vegetables vary in price, according to the supply in the market.

The allowance of food, and even the clothing served to them by the estate to which they are attached, are frequently sold or bartered: Indian corn, for instance, and herrings, we have known them sell in town for less than the cost price to the estate.

Independently, therefore, of the ordinary allowances of lodging, clothing, food, and medical attendance, afforded them by the proprietor, it is manifest that their means of increasing their comforts and acquiring property, are not so circumscribed as

has been represented, and so generally believed by people in England. Nor is it less matter of fact, that many of the plantation negroes do accumulate considerable wealth, whilst numbers of those in a *free* condition are in a state of utter destitution, and are often dependent for their subsistence upon the charity of the slaves, many of whom have been known to refuse the boon of freedom when offered to them. One instance in this island is mentioned by Mr. Coleridge.

"A very fine coloured woman, who had been manumitted from her youth, came to Captain Lyons, on whose estate she had formerly been a slave, and entreated him to cancel, if possible, her manumission, and receive her again as a slave. Surely she must have known the nature of that state, and the contingencies to which she exposed herself by returning to it, at least as well as any gentleman in England. Every one who has been in Barbadoes knows, that many of the wretched white creoles live on the charity of the slaves, and few people would institute a comparison on the respectability of the two classes." And we were ourselves a party to *forcing* freedom upon a mulatto

girl, at the desire of her father, so far at least, that she entreated us in the most earnest manner, with tears trickling down her cheeks, to forego the act of signing her manumission, which was to deprive her of all future dependence upon the estate for subsistence. That the plantation negroes in our West Indian colonies, those of provident and industrious habits, accumulate considerable sums of money, is so notorious, that the recital of the means which enable them to do so, is scarce necessary to establish the fact. In the island of Jamaica, we know of one instance of a slave bequeathing at his death, as large a sum as 150*l.* to his master, by whom we were assured, that other slaves belonging to the same estate, had frequently left considerable sums to the late proprietor his father.

At Saint Kitt's, we witnessed a scene of peculiar interest on an estate where we happened to be dining. A fire broke out among the negro-houses, and, owing to the prevalence of dry weather, the combustible materials of the buildings and their immediate vicinity to each other, in a few minutes nearly the whole of the village was in a blaze, presenting to the beholder the most singular compound

of all the elements of effect blended together, whose individuality was lost in the apparent conflict for pre-eminence; the awfully grand, keeping the mastery over the sublime and beautiful, aided, however, by the cries and lamentations of the affrighted negroes, the ringing of the plantation bell, the hallooing of those persons giving directions in checking the fury of the flames, the squeaking of pigs, and the fluttering and screams of guinea-fowls disturbed from their roosts in the neighbouring trees. The village was situated on the sides of one of the deep ravines which occur so frequently in that island, formed through the lapse of ages by the repeated heavy floods, rushing from the mountains to the sea, whose erratic courses continue to enlarge the bounds, and to afford, with the assistance of vegetation and simple culture on their rugged sides, some of the prettiest secluded spots imaginable. In such retired places, made more retired by the exuberant growth of overspreading trees and wild shrubs, the negroes delight in having their habitations, and such was the character of the spot to which our attention had been suddenly called. In that direction where the flames had as

yet made little progress, innumerable figures were moving about in confusion, in the attempt to secure with their persons, as much property as could be hastily collected; but at that point where the houses had at first become a prey to the fury of the flames, nothing was to be seen but the bare wooden skeletons of the dwellings fast yielding to the devouring element, and the glittering foliage and glowing trunks of numerous trees, intended to give shade and shelter to the ejected inhabitants. Here, to the surprise of every one who beheld him, in the middle of a tottering carcass where the flames were most ascendant, was the figure of an old negro, pulling with all his might at something which could not be defined through a glare of light which dazzled the perception. One of the overseers magnanimously rushed through the flames, and rescued him by forcibly dragging him beyond their devouring influence: by great exertions, the fire was at length got under, before it had entirely consumed the village. It was not until the next morning that we learnt the object of the old man's solicitude: it was a large box of money, consisting of small coin of almost every current denomination.

One of the most serious charges that have been alleged against the planters, in respect of ill-treatment of the slaves, is that they impose excessive work, and allow an insufficiency of food; and this has been partially supported by a few isolated instances of cruelty, and by bringing under review the allowance of rations usually distributed to each of the ordinary class of plantation labourers, without regarding the *community of interests* that subsists among them on every estate, and the indirect means afforded them of procuring more than ample subsistence from the cultivation of their grounds, and the breeding of live stock. Few persons, indeed, could hear that the plantation slave received only such an allowance of food and clothing instead of money for his labour, without associating in their minds, the *division* he might have to make of that allowance, among a number of starving persons composing his family, corresponding with the most ordinary circumstances of European peasantry. It would not occur to them, that every member of that family, in short, that every negro attached to the estate, including children at the breast, the old and superannuated, received a corresponding allowance.

Besides the grounds, of which we have spoken, allotted to them for their private cultivation, the smaller patches about their habitations, occasionally exhibit the culture of such indigenous vegetables and shrubs, as are known best to flourish, scarce showing in their arrangement the hand of industry or art;—and the great variety of fruit trees, especially the tall coco, the umbrageous tamarind, the orange, the sappadilla, and the soursop, which are almost invariably found growing in the villages that have been long settled, afford shade to their habitations, and assist in producing that peculiar charm over the spot, which rural scenery is so well known to possess. Seclusion, shade, and warmth in domestic retirement, are much coveted by the negroes, and so far do they carry the feeling, that they frequently allow the intervals between their houses to become choked with weeds and underwood, growing promiscuously with the *opuntia*, or prickly pear, the logwood, the *acacia*, the *castor-oil* plant, and the *physic nut*, which more commonly mark the boundaries of their village. The circulation of wholesome air, is thus often prevented, to the manifest injury of their health;

but so extremely tenacious are they of their private or domestic privileges, that they evince the most determined opposition to any measures which may not be consistent with their own ideas of comfort, or which may appear to them an infringement of their accustomed rights. We have known numerous instances of attempts to enforce regulations to overcome these prejudices; to induce them, for instance, to trim the thatch which commonly overhangs the walls of their houses nearly to the ground, serving to carry off the rain, and affording additional shade within, or to keep their ranges free from weeds; but such requisitions are almost invariably attended with discontent and disobedience on the part of the negroes, and disappointment to the requisitionist:—they look upon the hut they inhabit, whether assigned to them by their master, or left to them by a deceased relative or friend, as their unalienable right, and free from the interference or control of any one. Happily that prominent evil, among the number of West Indian atrocities which have been so constantly held up to public execration, namely, the indiscriminate separation and removal of families from one colony

to another, has been for many years interdicted and effectually stopped by parliamentary enactments; and even the removal of slaves from *one property* to another, in the *same colony*, and belonging to the *same proprietor*, where expediency recommends it, is seldom attempted with success, so powerful is the local attachment of the slaves, particularly among the *creoles*, and so difficult is it to overcome their prejudices, in any respect as relates to their private or domestic concerns.

A description of the habitations of the negroes in one island, may serve for those in the other colonies, as regards extent and internal arrangement, differing only in some of the materials of which they are built, and the cleanliness and order dependent upon the degree of improvement introduced among the slaves themselves. The walls of some of them are formed of stone, others of wattles, a sort of wicker-work or hurdle, which fits to a frame-work of wood, encased with clay and mud, and whitewashed. The dried leaves of the sugar-cane and coco-tree, serve as an impenetrable thatch over a wooden span roof, which covers an area usually about twenty-five feet in length, by ten or fifteen in breadth, admitting

of a division into two rooms; but larger proportions and an extra room, as well as superior taste, occasionally mark the residence of one of the "head people," or of a negro who has acquired better notions of comfort, with more ample means of gratifying them[1].

It must be manifest, however, that a striking difference is perceptible among them, on every estate, as well in respect of the several articles they possess, as the neatness and cleanliness of their persons and apparel; but this difference arises less from any inequality in their individual means of bettering their condition, and acquiring a taste for the artificial comforts and conveniences of life, than from the varied character of their disposition and habits, and from their consulting rather their temper and inclinations, than any system or prescribed rules, in their domestic arrangements.

In one room they have commonly a few stools or chairs, and a table, and a bedstead and bedding

[1] The drivers, the ranger, the head carpenter, mason, and cooper, the ploughman, and cattle doctor, are commonly designated "head people;" a comprehensive term among the negroes, for those whom they suppose to work more with their heads than their hands.

in the other; but we have found some of them possessed of sideboards, drawers, and other articles of furniture, the manufacture of some artificer belonging to the estate, or which the savings from the sale of their stock, have enabled them to purchase. In such habitations may be seen musquito-netting to their bedsteads, a quantity of earthenware, the walls nicely whitewashed, and decorated with some gaily coloured pictures. The floors are seldom boarded, the idea of harbouring vermin alone renders it inexpedient.

Their dwellings are all detached, each occupying its own prescribed plot, which they rigidly define by stones, or trees, and shrubs; and a small shed, rudely constructed, serves as a kitchen, in which their practices of the culinary art are as simple as the utensils commonly in use among them. A joint, or a whole fowl, is quite beyond their ideas of anatomy; every portion of their dressed food goes piecemeal into an iron pot, with a variety of vegetables, herbs, and hot peppers, composing a sort of gallimafrée, or hodge-podge; supper is the meal they most delight in.

We have invariably found a palpable difference

between those negroes living near to towns, and those removed to a greater distance in the country; the houses of the latter are better built, or kept in better order, their persons are more cleanly, their habits are more orderly, and among the *creoles* in particular, their social and domestic attachments are more conspicuous and permanent. The difference between a *creole* and an *African* negro, as well in respect to their disposition and habits, as to their physiognomy and general character, is palpable in a striking degree; and perhaps no better criterion could be found, by which to form a basis of computation as to the relative degrees of civilization at present introduced among the slaves in each colony, than the proportions of these two classes. The greater the number of those who have become *creolized*, or removed from the physical characteristics of the African, the greater advancement has been made in intellectual improvement; and it may be adduced as a proof of the beneficial effects which the extended and happily increasing communication of Christianity has had on their minds, and of the amelioration of their condition, that few of the superstitious and barbarous customs

peculiar to the African negroes, and which so long held dominion over their reason, any longer exist among them. The practice of Obeah, or witchcraft, for instance, so prevalent at one time on the plantations, and which carried so many thousand deluded beings spell-bound to their graves, may now be said to be known only by name; and the barbarous custom of burying their relations and friends at night, under the floors of their dwellings, and in the adjacent plots of ground, common among the African tribes, has been long since totally abolished. In this island the number of Africans is extremely small[1].

The *holiday* clothes of the superior class of women, consists generally of white calico or muslin frocks, with the gayest handkerchiefs they can procure, worn on the head *a la toque*—the mulatto girls manage this matter with peculiar taste—and we noticed among the female slaves in this island, a red or blue vandyke or scalloped border round the bottom of the coarse petticoats in which they

[1] In Jamaica, according to a return made from the Slave Registry Office, the number of *Africans* in 1827, was 126,903; the *creoles* 219,247.

work, some of them with two little pockets like watch pockets, affixed to the skirt below the waist. Some of the men affect a long coat, white calico or nankeen trowsers, a beaver hat, and an *umbrella.* All this looks well, and clearly proves that a taste for the comforts and artificial necessaries of life, is becoming every day more generally diffused among them, and that, as a natural consequence, there is an increasing incentive to assiduous, industrious, and systematic labour. The progress of man in improvement or civilization, must be gradual to be permanent; and in every nation or state, and in every stage of human existence, it has invariably depended more upon the imitative propensities of his nature, than upon any prescribed laws for his guidance.

The plantation negroes, who, in their present state of mental infancy, may with truth be regarded as children of larger growth, are naturally very inquisitive, and the females evince a degree of curiosity for which their sex is so particularly remarkable. Those who happen to be attached to the house as domestics, have a greater scope for the indulgence of this propensity, and they never

fail, as often as opportunity offers, to feast their inquiring eyes with a minute examination of whatever their master or mistress may possess, generally manifesting a superstitious veneration towards instruments of science, or such articles whose utility may happen to be beyond their comprehension. A whimsical illustration of this fact came to our knowledge in this island—a poor girl who had been a house servant, and who, for ill conduct had been turned into the field to work with the gang, suddenly exhibited the most singular gesticulations, by dropping her hoe, assuming a stooping posture, gathering her clothes round her legs, fixing her eyes on one spot, and screaming most vociferously, "Oh, me Māssa, me Māssa." Her master perceived her in this situation through his telescope from the house, with her eyes fixed on the focus; and her frantic gestures induced him to go to the field to ascertain the cause—poor Beneba was by this time quiet enough, although still panting with fatigue. It turned out that the spy-glass had been the cause of her fright; her curiosity, when in the house, having induced her to take a peep through it, after her master had been using it as a night-

glass with the *day* lens out. Every thing appeared to her topsy-turvy; the girl was petrified with astonishment, and when she afterwards beheld the bewitched instrument, which she called the "*Jumbe-gun*," levelled at herself, she at once imagined that her *head* was placed where her *heels* should be!

Their curiosity is not to be controlled; and so seldom do they manifest any thing like diffidence towards their masters, that even their respect partakes of an air of familiarity. We were engaged one moonlight night in the front of our dwelling, in taking an altitude of a star, and several negroes were drawn to the spot by curiosity. At length one of them said, "Massa, wharra you do da?" "I'm going to put the moon into the sea," we replied.—"Eh, me Gad," they exclaimed simultaneously, and for our own credit we were obliged to produce ocular demonstration, by allowing one of them to look through the quadrant, which we held in our hand. We had no sooner brought the reflected figure of the moon to the horizon, than he bolted as fast as his legs could carry him, without heeding the laughter of his companions, one of whom immediately desired to have his curiosity

gratified in the same way. He, however, tried the experiment with some share of distrust, and as soon as he beheld the figure of the planet in the same position, instead of following the example of the first negro, he walked slowly from our side, like a man anxious to make good his retreat without the imputation of cowardice; and, as if deriving security from a compliment, he exclaimed, "Me Gad, Massa, you really clebber: wharra you no can do?"

We had occasion to interfere in a dispute between several claimants to the effects of a deceased negro named Oxford; one impudent broad-faced fellow, whose countenance would have encountered a bench of judges, and stood cross-examination without wincing, having attempted to establish a claim to them upon an alleged verbal promise, which he considered sufficient to bar all claims of consanguinity. The effects were considerable, consisting of a large trunk of clothes, some furniture, domestic utensils, and a quantity of live stock. Having arranged matters to the apparent satisfaction of all parties, the brother of the deceased, in collecting his portion of the property, dropped from among

the clothes a paper, which he presented to us to read. It proved to be a letter from England, addressed to the deceased by a negro named Cæsar, who had some years before disappeared from the estate, and no tidings of him had ever been obtained. All the information that history and tradition have preserved respecting the family of the *Julii*, carries the mind back beyond the commencement of the Christian era, but the date of the document before us, anticipates nearly a score thousand years, to introduce to us a remote branch of the Cæsars, serving in his Britannic Majesty's Coldstream Guards. The following is a copy:—

March 11 18022.

dear father or brother this comes with oure kind love to you all hoping that thes fewe lines will find you all in good helth as thay leves us at present youre unfortinat sun John Smith I think you will be very mutch surpriezed when you read this from youre long silent son I have long wished to hear from you all but had no opertunity of letting you know wear to send to me before Mr Simson came to tound thearfore I hope to hear from you soon I have got two sons alive and three dead John is three years of age and william is eight I ham viry comfortibel of but should be more so if I cold see or hear from you all I have good helth for I have had onley one fit of ilness sens I left you I bless god for it dear father I wish you to let me know howe many of my famly is liven as I shall think the time long till I hear I hope you are all dooing well as I ham at present I belong to the king's body-guard musion

in the secont ridgment of Coldstream my wife is as tall as my sister Sarah give oure kind love to John and Sarah rose and mary and william and all thear childrenn and tell them that I hante forgot any of them that was when I come away the onley purson I ever saw wass bat lost brother from thear—thear is agreate many of oure collor in inglant beggen in the streets and thinges that you throe away thear the peapel make a deal of money of heare oringes is sixpence apeace best part of the year my childrenn are the colar of Sarah litel boy James as my wife is awite woman give My respects to all my play felers and friendes and tell them they wood knot know me I ham grone so mutch I ham as tawl as my brother John dear father I hope that you will not fail in writing to me as soon as you can as this letter will let you know weare to send to me and let me know all the pertlers about the familey and contery I wish you to let all youre frends know that I ham alive and you have heard from me and I have bin in the armey ever since I left you and I goe to play the musick to all the royall familey I goe to the royal pales every day with a red Jacket coverd with gold lace and gold tacels in my boots I have fourteen shilens per weak the band hear is not in the barrix whin we have don oure duty we goe to our oun apartments I play the tomberrean when you write you must derect to John Smith Musion in is Majesty secont ridgment of guards cold stream London So we conclude and remain youre dutyfull Sunn

JOHN SMITH.

We are not quite reconciled to the publication of the document, as our property in it might, perhaps, be disputed, but "Cæsar's Commentaries," have been long since identified with the literature of the country. It is, moreover, our desire to show that *Cæsar* yielded to the opinion of *Cassius*, by adopting the name of John Smith,

" Write them together, it is as fair a name;
Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well:"

and that although his red coat, and gold lace and tassels, and fourteen shillings a week, had reconciled him to the change that his aspiring spirit had sought, he seemed conscious that he was born under a more propitious planet than many of " his colour," who had also sought independence in freedom, and had found starvation in its place.

Numerous instances have been known of negroes deserting, effecting a passage to England, and, after suffering all the privations of beggary in the streets of London, have endeavoured to return to the estates from which they had absconded [1]. Freedom, joined with poverty and labour, is, in the estimation of most of the slaves, the very perfection of all that is absurd, and they exemplify this idea in many of their remarks to each other; for instance, if they see a negro indulging in idleness,

[1] An instance occurred a few years ago in a young man of colour, who had deserted from an estate in Jamaica. He had not been long in England, before he found his situation so much worse than it had been in the West Indies, that he sought the proprietor of the estate, a Mr. Scott, and entreated his permission to return to Jamaica as a slave.

they will observe, "poor man, he tink he free!" and imagining that their master is indulging in his bed longer than usual, they will make the same remark, probably with this addition—"he no free, doe, he work wid da hoe in he hed,"—he's not free though, he works with the hoe in his head, *i. e.* he's thinking how the labour of the hoe may be made serviceable.

"Mr. John Christian will Be happy of the ladies company on Saturday week to spend the evening at Gordon's.

"Mr. Christian is unacquainted with the ladies names so begs to be excused.

"*To Madamoiselles at Bodkins.*"

So runs, verbatim, the original circular, written in a very tolerable hand, issued by Mr. John Christian, to invite the *polished* ebony damsels of the district in which he lived, to a *soirée* at an estate called Gordon's; and although we were not present to report progress of the entertainment, we doubt not it was as felicitous in all its details as music, mirth, and dancing could make it. These formal invitations are by no means uncommon; some of them printed on cards, in which, probably, the orthography is amended by the compositor

at the printing-office in town. Very few of the slaves can write, but there are few, if any estates, that have not coloured people who have acquired some proficiency in the art, who are applied to on such occasions by the negroes, and among this class it is that the etiquette of sending cards is principally observed. Music and dancing, the negroes love to their heart's core, although of late years, they have been taught by the missionaries to believe that they are inconsistent with morality. At the time to which we are referring, dancing was frequent in the negro-houses in an evening; and once a week, a more general assemblage took place under the auspices of one negro, who invited people from the neighbouring estates. On such occasions, it was customary to ask leave of their master, to ensure a license for a greater duration of their obstreporous mirth, which, from the usual vicinity of his dwelling to the negro-houses, he must necessarily hear; and, as these entertainments were profitable to the negro providing them, it was expedient to admit of them according to the character of the applicant, and to regulate them in turns to avoid monopoly. Each negro coming to the assembly paid half a bit, or a

bit, in order, partly, to meet the expense of a fiddler, who commonly charged as much as four and five dollars; and who, if not to be found among themselves, was always to be engaged from among the slaves upon some other estate. If it happened, that the negro giving the entertainment had inferior accommodation, he would borrow a more eligible spot from another, the dancing taking place in the house, and in the adjoining plot of ground: the profusion of beauty and ornament displayed by the tall luxuriant foliage, which usually overcanopies their dwellings, and the fresh fragrance of fruit and flowers so predominant in the night-season in the tropics, conspiring to cheer and gladden the hearts of the festive throng.

Often have we walked in amongst them, without interrupting in the least, their joyous gambols, or receiving any further notice, than the simple salutation of "How you do, Massa?" from all their voices at the same moment, unless, perchance, one of the bystanders should pull a form towards us for a seat, or, if standing at the door, say, "Massa, you no come in?"

One morning produced a serious commotion

among several owners of horses and gigs. One complained that his boots were not to be found, or if found, that they were uncleaned, and his vagabond domestic was absent without leave, no one knew where. At length the culprit appeared with a white tongue, and a long story propounding every thing but the truth, and demanding an honourable acquittal from the imputation of intentional neglect, upon the plea of illness. His appeal had the desired effect, but, unfortunately, similar scenes were enacted in other quarters, between masters who had the same morning been subjected to similar privations, and their servants, who were not quite so felicitous in exculpating themselves; and the trifling circumstance of a gig belonging to one of the former having been seriously injured by that mischievous non-entity, "*nobody*," was so remarkable a coincidence with the fact, that *nobody* had appeared that morning in the owner's bedchamber, that it carried conviction against the culprit survitor, without the evidence of a jaded horse, whose looks declared it had passed a restless night.

An event travels fast in a small community.

The evening collects its dinner parties, and brings intelligence to the point of convergence. Imagine a party congregating in a gallery which fronts the dwelling of the host, all enduring a languid respiration through that flat and unprofitable half hour which precedes dinner, that dreary waste which borders upon the exuberant fertility of an Apician *spread;* when the intellects are too much jaded to be active, the sense of smelling tantalized by the vagrant odours from the kitchen, those of seeing and hearing deceived by the passing of a carriage, the sound of whose wheels had promised to bring the last guest, and that of *feeling*, tortured by a legion of mosquitoes and sandflies, whose gluttony you envy, whilst you curse them in your vengeance. Dr. Johnson, with a feeling which his biographer has termed a "delicate humanity," once attempted to reconcile the torture endured by six persons in waiting for one, with the pain the one might suffer from their sitting down to dinner without him; but we dispute the position, it is a standing maxim in the *code gourmand*, that a guest should be punctual.

Again, we say, imagine such a scene as we have

described; the last guest arrived, the unheard or unheeded excuse for his tardiness, the sympathetic movement of the party, the delectable euphony of knives and forks and plates, the buzz and commotion of servants, and, finally, your spirits, your intellects,

> ———" whose use
> Depends so much upon the gastric juice;"

and your energies resuscitated to a degree of vigorous animation, which causes you almost to lament that you are not still waiting the arrival of the tardy guest, in order to enjoy, *de novo*, the delicious coalescence, the inexplicable sublimation of the material and immaterial essences which have so elevated you to a state of supersubstantial fruition. In despite of the doctrine of the Phœnicians, it is certain that the mind languishes, the intellectual retina becomes obscured, and the body enervated under the solar influence in the tropics; but evening and repletion revive and reconcile their accordant principles; the intellects gradually expand, like the night-blooming cereus in its advent to maturity, becoming redolent in exuberant fer-

tility about midnight. "Much drinking, little thinking," says Swift:—

"Quod est in corde sobrii est in ore ebrii,"

says another; and why not?—A thinking, silent man, is like a parish pump with the handle locked. Thinking serves as a dam, a lock-gate that stops the mellifluent stream of intelligence, and causes it to become muddled and useless from stagnation. The West Indians think, or seem to think, too much; they delight in day-dreams, in shadowy mysteries, in the occult and intangible, in castle-building and paradoxes, in galloping through fancy's fairy kingdom, till they acquire a distaste for the beaten track of a plain road. This accounts for their common highways being so abominably bad. Always projecting, seldom executing, or if a project be commenced, it is often allowed to fall to the ground before it attains maturity. We really must record, *en passant*, one instance of persevering purpose, one bright example of superlative sagacity in an attorney of this island:—the proprietor had sent from England a very handsome *sun*-dial, to be fixed on the estate; it was

done, looked very nice, bright, and imposing; but the rain and dews might have obscured its lustre and engendered verdigris, so he built a *roof* over it. This surpassed the ingenuity of the man who put out his light that the fleas might not see to bite him. Generally speaking, the planters may be said to travel in a quotidian circle, which only brings them to the point from which they started—and from which *we* started, the dinner-table. Here they are different beings, they quit their world of floating phantoms for the realms of reality, become comprehensively intelligent in an unrestrained interchange of ideas, exert all their polemical abilities in the exercise of a sort of mental gymnastics; but, unfortunately, like the coruscant emissions of fireworks, which soon vanish into nothing, they do not afford sufficient continuance of light, to enable improvement to proceed far in her journey. The fact is, for many years, every new day has awakened West India proprietors to a consciousness of increasing embarrassment, and a fearful apprehension of the future, their hands have been tied, their energies paralyzed, their characters defamed, and the most gloomy forebodings have counteracted all incen-

tives to exertion. We are speaking more particularly of those who reside on their estates, in most instances, merely the nominal owners; with a perpetual day and night-mare on their imagination, in the shape of a mortgagee in possession. That an improved system of agriculture, the more general use of the plough,—for *threshing* machine they have long had credit,—and a more liberal policy in the treatment of the negroes, has in every island been introduced of late years, is not to be denied, but such indications of improvement may be said to represent a few patches of culture on a common, that do not materially destroy the prevailing aspect of dreariness, so far as relates to their private and domestic concerns. But our health has been drunk in our absence, so we will return to the dinner-table: imagine the party to be large, the subjects under discussion various, their several ramifications numerous, and the incidental cross sentences inexplicably diverting. At length one subject gains the mastery, and one person is heard in turn, each complaining of the absence and neglect of his servant, of his jaded horse, and broken gig, developing the astounding fact, that their delinquent

domestics had, the night before, been to a "*quality*-ball" and had made free with their masters' horses to support the dignity of the assemblage. These quality balls are "got up" by subscription, chiefly by the free-coloured people without excluding the slaves, and they owe their peculiar designation to the personation of the leading white inhabitants, including, of course, the governor and his lady among the *élite*. On the present occasion it was held at Parham, a small village on the northern coast of the island, inhabited almost exclusively by coloured people; and the affair went off with more than usual *eclât*, and to the entire satisfaction of all parties, except those who were detected in their unlawful use of horse-flesh, for which a negro entertains an ungovernable appetite. They love riding as much as they love music and dancing, and whether exercising your horse, or sent on a message, or with letters for the packet, which requires dispatch, let them get out of your sight, and six legs are not enough to afford them felicity in flight, or to do justice to that notable maxim:—

Asperius nihil est humili cum surgit in altum.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ANTIGUAN DAINTIES—BARBUDA—DESCRIPTION OF THE ISLAND—INDIGENOUS TURTLE—WILD STOCK—BULL HUNTING—DARBY'S CAVE—MANCHINEEL—HISTORICAL SKETCH OF ANTIGUA.

"Strong reasons make strong actions: let us go."

King John.

VERILY, gentlemen of Antigua, your corn-fed mutton is excellent; you moreover evince much philosophical acumen in your piscivorous propensities. Your crawl-nurtured *corramor* is a competitor in merit with the salmon, and for the recondite process of stewing, your mud-fish surpasseth the pond-fed carp[1]; and then your groupers, yellow-

[1] The corramor is the king-fish, taken young and kept in a crawl, or in a pond, where it acquires superior flavour. The king-fish is, nevertheless, an excellent fish, and is greatly esteemed. The mud-fish are common in the water-courses and ponds, and appeared to us to resemble the tench more than any other fish we could compare it to.

tails, mullets, and snappers, your trunk lobsters and cockles, and that delicate tantalizing dainty, the mangrove oyster, are all superlatively good: but where, in the name of Apicius, do you get your venison? It comes from the neighbouring island of Barbuda: which lies nearly due north of Antigua, about twenty eight miles, but so low, that in hazy weather you are close in with the shore, when only the tops of the trees appear above the horizon as if growing out of the water. In the words of that quaint old cosmographer, Peter Heylyn, it is an island, "well known among the sailors because much avoided, or rather avoided because well known; the danger of its company making their further acquaintance shunned." Its greatest extent is about fifteen miles from S. E. to N. W., the coast nearly surrounded by a prodigious number of sunken rocks and shoals; and the many memorials of disastrous *shipwrecks* which appertain to its history, gave great licence to the self-importance of our pilot, who very excusably considered our lives in his keeping, in conveying us there in a small *sloop*. Within a short distance of the shore the navigation is intricate enough; nothing but rocks and breakers in all directions,

affording only a few narrow passages between them for a small vessel to pass, and the whole line of coast, as far as the eye can reach, presents no other features than a rolling surf, an extensive uniform range of thick wood above it, and, at the point of our landing, a dilapidated tower of Martello construction, which bears the name of a fort. Nothing can equal the wild and desolate appearance of the place; we wanted only a gale to give it a genuine stamp of savage ferocity; and before we could well reconcile ourselves to our locality, three or four buccaneer looking negroes, in appropriate costume, with leather caps, and belts, and gaiters, and mounted on the anatomy of as many scared looking quadrupeds, emerged suddenly from the thicket and came to a dead halt before us, by way of giving further assurance that we were abscinded from every thing civilized. The flag that surmounted the fort, had notified our arrival to the supervisor of the manor, whose "castle" was situated about three miles and a half in a direct line from us, but we had marvellous misgivings, that our road thither might prove somewhat more discursive, from the very significant indication of an erratic

and unmanageable disposition on the part of our charger, whose elastic curvetings might have persuaded us that we were affixed to a bottle of Indian rubber under violent resilition, if the contracted diameter of his sides, inclining to a prominent back bone, had not rather given assurance that we were seated on a wedge to be persecuted by friction. The appearance of these animals indicated that they had been imported in packages, and had lost their natural proportions by compression of the sides, but their meagre attenuated limbs, high withers, rough coats, unshod hoofs, glaring eyes, and distended nostrils, unequivocally declared them to be indigenous.

We proceeded through a narrow grassy defile, formed by trees and bushes on each side, which shut out every other object; and the occasional transverse tracks, presenting the same aspect, served only to define the continuous extent of forest. At length the location of the regent of Barbuda opened upon us, standing in a cleared tract of land which stretches to the sea; and if the reader has perused Sir Walter Scott's Pirate, and retains in his memory the description of the residence of old Magnus

Troil, he will have a tolerably correct notion of the scene before us.

The settlement is situated on the western side of the island, a narrow neck of land, which runs in a parallel direction nearly the whole extent of the coast, forming an extensive lagoon or estuary of several miles in length in front of it. An old dilapidated tower, with several smaller erections attached to it, occupying one corner of an extensive parallelogram, formed by high walls, constitutes "the castle." The tower is said to have been built in the days of buccaneering notoriety, and it hath features that correspond with its reputation. One large room occupies the upper part of it, to which access is gained by a ladder, a convenience that may be dispensed with at discretion to avoid unwelcome visitors. Inside the enclosure, there is a kitchen and other offices, and a raised terrace round the wall, with a well in the centre, the whole affair indicating strength and security; qualifications, which are tacitly implied to be useless by a more modern formal farm-house looking building, which stands in the rear of it, where the vicegerent is domiciled. The hospital, stables, and artificers'

stores lie detached in different directions. The whole scene presents the most semi-civilized unpicturesque appearance imaginable—*mais n'import*, happiness, as applied to any state or condition of human life, is merely a relative term, that is always associated with a mixture of evil; the nervous system has something to do with it; and if our host had not been a martyr to the gout, he ought to have been the happiest mortal in existence, with a profusion of venison, turtle, black crabs, and old Madeira, and as many horses as might serve to break the necks of half the fox-hunters in England. Let the corporation of London only purchase the fee-simple of the island of Barbuda, and elect annually from among themselves a vicegerent duly qualified, and they may each in turn feast to their heart's content, and bestow their benison on the primitive excellencies of indigenous turtle. He who has never tasted of this amphibious triad in its native latitudes, has no comprehensive idea of the generous redundancy of relish, the cherishing and invigorating stimulus it imparts to the percipient gourmand. The West Indians practise, with scientific distinction, a more scrupulous exactness

in modifying the trichotomous divisions of fish, flesh, and fowl, than your *artiste* of the kitchen in England, whose skill attains only to confounding their distinctive properties in the masquerade of soup. He has no conception of the unsophisticated excellence of turtle steaks; of the emollient and salubrious qualities of green fat, asserting its own supremacy, and the incomparable *goût* of fresh turtles' eggs! besides, the animal wastes in flesh, and the viscosity of its juices become empoverished on the voyage.

The number of negroes on the settlement was about 500, whose occupation, excepting the few employed as artificers and huntsmen, was confined to the cultivation of about 500 hundred acres of land, planted chiefly with corn. The settlement is surrounded by stone walls and wattles to prevent depredations from the wild cattle. Every other portion of the island, which contains in the whole, upwards of 39,000 acres, is in a state of natural wildness, the intricate clearances made by the hunters, the rudely constructed pens erected around a pond, to serve as traps for the wild cattle, and an old dilapidated building in the north-eastern quarter

of the island, called, or rather miscalled "the highlands," alone indicate the occasional intrusion of man into the dreary wilderness. The wild stock was supposed to amount to about 3000 head of horned cattle, 40,000 sheep, between 400 and 500 horses, besides deer and hogs. Guinea fowl, wild ducks, pigeons, quails, snipes, and curlews, are also abundant; and almost every variety of fish, peculiar to these seas, is in profusion around the coasts. Here, then, is a place for a sportsman to run riot in; and so on the following morning, we mounted the best horse out of a twenty-one-stall stable, left our worthy host reciprocating with gout on a pillow, and proceeded to explore the country and to commit murder. The two negro huntsmen who accompanied us were intelligent sort of beings; they spoke very tolerable English, and practised it with great volubility. They had each six or seven horses allowed them, with two or three assistants who travelled on foot; both man and beast having rather a hard life of it in running down the wild *bulls*, to prepare them, by anatomical process, for the yoke. As soon as they find a herd, they select a young full grown bull, which is separated, with

considerable tact from his companions, and he immediately seeks safety in flight. The chase then commences, helter skelter in all directions, through thickets and passes, over rocks and brakes, heads down, heels up; and as soon as the huntsman approaches near enough to the chase, he attempts to throw a long rope over the animal's horns, with such practised dexterity that he seldom fails in his object, or in doing so, he catches the tail of the affrighted creature with his hand, and either succeeds in throwing him on his side by a singular twist of the appendage, or runs with him till he stops in a state of exhaustion. As soon as the bull is secured, he submits to the mystical ordeal of receiving a new *name*, when he is allowed to depart to enjoy the range of the wilderness, as a sort of freemason among the untractable herd, until he is again chased to be sent on his travels. Flocks of wild sheep are collected for a similar purpose, by a long extended line of negroes, proceeding with gongs and hootings to frighten them to a point. The horses, which have a penchant for bull-hunting, and are trained to it, are nearly as wild as the cattle they chase, but the initiated riders manage to keep

their seats under every difficulty, although occasionally compelled to give up the tail as a security. Let the less skilful adventurer look to himself; he will have little power to restrain the ferocious ardour of the half-tamed animal he rides, and he may dislocate a shoulder, or a knee-pan, in passing through the thickets, without getting the brute to sympathize by stopping.

The general surface of the country is perfectly flat, here and there considerable patches of savannah, affording interesting openings as you emerge from the thick forest of trees, which covers most part of the island. At one moment, a deer darts across your path with the quickness of thought, and disappears with a harlequin leap into the thicket; at another, you behold a sheep blundering like a clown in the same attempt, till it becomes literally fixed to one spot, with its limbs paralyzed by fright; and, at the next, you are nearly thrown from your saddle by a sudden plunge of your horse, startled by the rustling bound of an animal in the brake. From the ruins of the former dwelling of the attorney, which stand on an elevated spot in the aforesaid highlands, nothing is to be seen but

one extended mass of wood, reaching in every direction to the coast, where the surf is constantly rolling over the surrounding breakers; from this point, after a gale, may be ascertained if a wreck has been caught in the trap. Such an event occurring, boats are immediately conveyed from the settlement across the island in carts.

We visited a natural curiosity, called "Darby's Cave," situated about a mile south-east of the mountain-house. A considerable mass of thick brush-wood, of a more verdant and luxuriant character than common, and the clamour of numerous birds which had notice of our approach, gave us the first intimation of our immediate proximity to it; the green foliage of the bushes proving to be the ascendant branches of trees of considerable growth, whose stems were concealed by an immense concavity which lay beneath us. It admits of only one place of descent, and that very steep; the lateral branches of a black loblolly, and the pendant stems of a huge fig or banian tree, affording assistance in the attempt. The stems of smaller trees occupy the whole area, affording by their foliage a complete canopy over the bottom of the

excavation, but as we descended, the intercurrence of the rays of the anti-meridional sun penetrated to the depth, and lodged beautiful gleams of light on one side of the cave, whilst the opposite was shrouded in deep masses of shadow. In the direction of the light, the edge of the excavation overhangs, in awful predominance, the rugged masses beneath; and from it, as if formed by elaborate art, depended a green curtain, composed of small vegetable filaments or vines, as if to conceal from the beholder, the impending danger in venturing within its folds. Immediately to the right, rose a rocky mass like the base of a rugged pillar, or like the sacrificing stone common in Hindoo temples, and on the summit of it sat a pure white gawling, as if placed there for effect, by the presiding genius of the place. The whole scene was singularly beautiful. There is a similar cave to the southward, called " Bryan's Cave," and near to it another, of a different construction, with many dark and intricate windings, into which we also penetrated with torches, to the evident discomfiture of innumerable bats. It was a serious undertaking, but we enjoyed the *Frieschutz* effect amazingly, especially as our

negro guides had certain misgivings which seriously affected their consciences.

We particularly noticed, in our rides, a beautiful shrub growing in great abundance, resembling the holly, with red berries on which the wild hogs feed, whence it has acquired the name of the hogwood bush; and the chrysobalanus icaco, or cocoa plumb, which the natives call fat pork, was also abundant. Here, too, luxuriates "the dark and deadly manchineel," whose specious fruit, like the fair apples of Sodom, provoketh repentance from him who eateth of them [1].

[1] The manchineel apple resembles the crab apple in appearance and size, and its fragrant smell when ripe favours the deception. Many writers have assigned fatal consequences to those who eat of it, and to the tree, the power of blinding for a time those who have slept under its shade. The branches contain a milky juice which will certainly blister the skin, and it has been a common trick among the negroes to apply it to their backs, in order to excite the compassion of those who might mistake it for the effects of beating. Hughes in his Natural History of Barbadoes, tells us of an attempt made by a female slave to poison her master, by putting a spoonful of this juice into his chocolate, which immediately produced a violent burning in his throat and stomach. Suspecting he was poisoned he resorted to an emetic, which gave relief, but it was a long while before he recovered, although the oily nature of the chocolate had partially acted as an antidote. The same writer also tells us, of a lady who not only *longed* for the apples, but actually ate of them with impunity.

The island is so destitute of springs, that the negroes, to secure themselves in their journeys a supply of water from the rains, form holes in the smooth rocky surfaces from which the soil has been washed, covering them over with loose stones, to prevent being forestalled by the inhabitants of the wilderness.

Barbuda was settled as early as 1628, by a planter of the name of Littleton, who removed to it from Saint Christopher's, having obtained a grant of the island from the Earl of Carlisle. But the frequent incursions of the Caribs obliged him to forego the design of planting, after conferring upon it, owing to its beautiful appearance, the name of Dulcina. It was many years afterwards granted by the Crown to an ancestor of the present Sir Christopher Codrington, whose family continue to hold it; deriving a considerable revenue from the sale of its stock, and from the salvage of the many lamentable wrecks, which have at different times been driven on its shores [1].

[1] His Majesty's ship, Griffin, twenty-eight guns, was wrecked on this island in 1761, and fifty of her crew perished; and in 1813, the Woolwich, forty-four guns, shared the same fate, but her crew were saved.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF ANTIGUA.

It has been noticed in the historical sketch of Saint Christopher's, that in 1629, a few years after Sir Thomas Warner had settled that island, conjointly with the French, the colonists were attacked by a Spanish force under Don Frederick de Toledo. A few of the routed settlers who escaped by sea, landed on this island, but owing to the unfavourable appearance of the country and the want of water they abandoned it; superinduced probably by a desire to return to Saint Christopher's, as soon as they heard that the Spaniards had quitted it. Notwithstanding the unfavourable accounts of the island given by these Frenchmen, Sir Thomas Warner, in 1632, sent his son, with a few families, to make a settlement upon it, and they proceeded to clear the land and to cultivate tobacco, but that the same spirit of adventure, which appears to have characterized the settlement of some of the other colonies at this time, did not extend to Antigua, may be assumed from the fact, that in 1640, the number of inhabitants amounted to only about thirty families. They were this year attacked by

the Caribs and as many as fifty persons were killed, and the governor's lady, then pregnant, her two children, and three other women, were carried off by them [1].

In 1650, during the revolutionary troubles in England, Antigua appears among those settlements that continued to acknowledge the authority of the Crown, and its name is included in the celebrated prohibitory ordinance of the Parliament against trading with them. At this time, however, the colony could scarcely have been of sufficient importance to merit the notice taken of it; and it was not until thirteen years afterwards, in 1663, and thirty years from the period when Mr. Warner

[1] It appears to have been the practice of these savages in their incursions upon the settlers of these islands, so far to exercise mercy towards the women and children as to spare their lives. Whether their treatment of them afterwards was preferable to death, it would be difficult to affirm at this period, upon the vague and contradictory statements respecting their character. "One of the earliest and most respectable settlers in Antigua, named Yeamans," says an account of that island, "was carried off by the Caribs, but whether his life was spared, owing to caprice of the stomach, or the prevalence of dyspepsia among them at the time, has never been clearly ascertained. He, however, returned to Antigua after an absence of several years, at the felicitous moment, when his wife was about giving her hand to another husband."

removed to it, that any authorized or permanent settlement took place; when Francis, Lord Willoughby, obtained a grant of the island from Charles II., and it was included in his lordship's patent, as Governor of Barbadoes and the other British Caribbee Islands. Several French settlers had by this time established themselves on the island, but upon being required to swear allegiance to the English government, most of them retired to Guadaloupe and Martinique; and at their instigation, the French in those islands afterwards made an attack upon the English settlers. They succeeded in taking the governor prisoner, and in obliging the forts to surrender, but the arrival of a reinforcement of English induced them to retire. In 1666, they made another descent upon the island with a more formidable force, and having landed with little opposition in Five Islands' Bay, they plundered and burnt all the houses in the neighbourhood, and took as many as twenty-one officers prisoners. The success of this incursion induced M. *Lion*, the Governor of Guadaloupe, to land with more troops, who appears to have conducted the invasion with more than even

the accustomed atrocity of West India warfare at this particular period, and no less characteristic of the name he bore. The English were compelled to capitulate, but by the treaty of peace signed at Breda in the following year, the island was restored to them. From this period, Antigua has been free from any other hostile incursions, than occasional visits from the Caribs, who, for several years continued to land on the coast, and plunder and massacre the inhabitants.

In 1672, the island reverted to the crown, and the several British Caribbee settlements were divided into two distinct governments; Sir William Stapleton being appointed to the *leeward* division, consisting of Antigua, Monserrat, Nevis, Saint Christopher's, and the Virgin Islands [1]. In the meantime, other settlers had removed to Antigua, and had materially promoted the welfare of the colony, by enlarging the community of interests and extending cultivation; but the gentleman who appears to have

[1] This division continued until 1812, when Antigua, Monserrat, and Barbuda, were made one government; and Saint Christopher's, Nevis, and the Virgin Islands another. By a recent arrangement, they have again been placed under the jurisdiction of one governor.

contributed more particularly to its growing prosperity at this period of its history, was Colonel Christopher Codrington, who, with several other gentlemen had removed from Barbadoes. The experience and enterprising mind of Colonel Codrington, appears to have diffused a spirit of intelligence and activity among the settlers: his great knowledge in plantation matters, and his liberal acquirements, together with extensive pecuniary means to support so expensive an undertaking, not only placed him above the reach of competition, in planting and improving his estates, but enabled him to withstand the various vicissitudes to which an infant colony is at all times subject. In 1673, the year preceding his arrival, it is stated that there were only five hundred and seventy negroes in the island; whence we may conclude that cultivation was on a very limited scale. From this period, however, Antigua may be said to date its prosperity. The settlers had benefited by experience in the growth and manufacture of the sugar-cane; and tobacco, indigo, and ginger, which had been cultivated by the earlier settlers, were now yielding the soil to that more valuable and profitable plant.

After the restoration in 1689, Colonel Codrington was appointed governor of the Leeward Islands. The war between England and France which followed soon after, afforded him a wide field for the exercise of those qualifications for which he appears to have been particularly distinguished. The projects of the enemy in the neighbouring islands, were, in many instances defeated by anticipation; and the coasts of Antigua were well guarded against the attacks of the Indians, who, in league with the French, continued to land and to massacre the inhabitants.

Upon the death of Governor Codrington in 1698, he was succeeded in the government by his son, also named Christopher, who arrived at Antigua with his regiment in the following year, but his administration was of shorter duration than his merited popularity among the colonists might reasonably have led them to hope for; he resigned the government in 1703[1]. In the following year, Sir William Matthew was nominated to succeed him,

[1] This gentleman died at Barbados in 1710. He bequeathed his plantations in Barbadoes, and part of the island of Barbuda, to the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

but he dying on board the vessel that conveyed him from England, led to the appointment of Colonel Daniel Parke, who arrived at Antigua in 1706.

In the early history of these islands, intestine broils arising from jealousies of authority, often disturbed the tranquillity and welfare of the planters, but there is no instance on record, of their having led to such acts of lawless violence, as those, which, during the four years of Governor Parke's administration, completely destroyed the whole fabric of social order, and paralyzed the energies of the executive power in Antigua. "The extreme depravity of Parke's character," says Mr. Edwards, "is attested by innumerable instances of atrocity and licentiousness, such as history records of the most unbridled and profligate tyrants: he neither revered God nor man, and it soon began to be said of him, that he spared no man in his anger, nor woman in his lust." We fear, however, that the fate of this unfortunate man was too much like that of the dog, that was hunted and murdered by the mob as a *mad* dog, from his mistress, who was a very *nice* woman, having taken offence at a trifling *dégoût*, and denounced him as a *bad* dog.

"One of his first exploits after his arrival at Antigua," says the same writer, "was to seduce the wife of a Mr. Chester, the most considerable merchant in the island: he then attempted to murder the man whom he had wronged, by causing him to be tried on a capital charge for an act of accidental homicide [1]." These and numerous other atrocities laid to his charge, are founded chiefly upon articles of impeachment, surreptitiously framed by his enemies and conveyed to the British Government, to which he was required to attach the broad seal, without even knowing the contents; and in consequence of the tardy notice taken by the English government of the complaints thus transmitted, caused by the counter statements and addresses to her Majesty, from the council and leading members of the community, the rebellious party broke through all bounds. They insulted him openly in the streets, and made several attempts at his life, in one of which he was shot through the arm from a cane piece. Matters were now fast hastening to an issue; the conflicts of party feeling in the assembly, induced him to

[1] Edwards's West Indies, under the head of Antigua.

issue a proclamation to dissolve it, but it continued sitting in defiance, and passed a resolution that he no longer possessed legal authority. At length, on the 7th December, 1710, terms of accommodation were proposed, and he offered to meet the assembly to arrange them, but such was the ungovernable ferocity of the mob, who had been so long excited to acts of rebellion by the artifice of their designing leaders, that while the arrangement was in contemplation, they formed in two bodies consisting of about 500, and surrounded his house. One of them, commanded by a man of the name of Piggot, took possession of an eminence that commanded the dwelling, and attacked it with great fury, as did the other, under cover of a trench, in an opposite direction. The fire was returned by the few soldiers who supported the general, until most of them were either killed or wounded, when the rebels stormed the house. The governor courageously met them, and shot Piggot dead, but at the same time received a wound in the thigh that brought him to the ground. His attendants upon this threw down their arms, and the exasperated populace seized his miserable person, tore the clothes

from his body, broke his back with the but-ends of their muskets, and afterwards dragged him into the streets, whence he was taken to the house of a man who commiserated his sufferings, and there expired. Of the queen's forces, who supported the governor, Ensign Lyndon and thirteen privates were killed, and Colonel Newell, and Lieutenant Worthington, with twenty-four men were wounded. Of the people, four were killed and twenty-eight wounded. Such was the lamentable end of Colonel Daniel Parke, a man who, notwithstanding his character has been placed in the worst light by most historians, evidently possessed an intelligent and discerning mind capable of detecting abuses, and a persevering energy, combined with undaunted courage in the attempt to correct them; and whose great error appears to have been an inaptitude in applying the pruning knife of reformation upon his assuming the government of these colonies, rather than an innate indifference to the wounds he might have occasioned in the operation. We are assured of this from a careful and impartial perusal of every document extant, connected with the progress of his administration, together with the articles of impeachment, his replies, and the

depositions of the numerous witnesses interested in the transactions which led to so tragical a catastrophe; and it is worthy of remark, that in none of them have we found the least notice of his intercourse with Mrs. Chester, alluded to by Mr. Edwards, or of any similar acts to warrant the imputation. On the other hand, it is clearly proved, that the act of "accidental homicide," proceeded from a vindictive spirit on the part of Mr. Chester, who caused the death of a man by throwing a tankard at his head; and that the foreman of the jury was an intimate acquaintance of the defendant.

One of the ringleaders, named Smyth, was brought to trial in England, as long after the date of the event as 1715, but owing to some informality in the proceedings, he was acquitted, and Dr. Daniel Mackinnon, Samuel Watkins, and Thomas Kerby, other principal sharers in the rebellion, under the same indictment, were consequently liberated from Newgate.

Considerable time elapsed before tranquillity and order were restored, and in the year immediately following the death of Governor Parke, although

a considerable French force had assembled at Martinique for the invasion of this and the neighbouring colonies, more serious apprehensions were entertained of another insurrection among the inhabitants, than the inroads of a foreign foe; and Colonel Douglas, who had in the meantime succeeded to the government, was almost as unpopular as his predecessor had been. Nothing, however, particularly interesting of an historical nature, transpired for a long succession of years, after the period of which we have been speaking, and, with the exception of the events we have noticed, from the first settlement of this island down to the present time, it may be said to present fewer scenes of historical interest than any other of the British colonies in these seas. To this circumstance, in a great measure, may be attributed its long run of prosperity, and the advanced state of its slave population in the scale of civilization and moral feeling, compared with that of most of the neighbouring colonies, which at different periods have been subjected to hostile incursions and international changes, and consequent interruptions in a course of improvement. Antigua stands foremost among the

British West Indian colonies, for an early example of a relaxation of the code in favour of the slave population.

In 1732, the Moravians first commenced their labours in this island, and we cannot refrain from expressing our regret that those truly pious and unaffected servants of the Gospel, whose zealous and simple ministry has wrought so much good among the slaves in this and in some of the other islands, more particularly in the Danish settlements, were not more generally encouraged throughout the West Indies, and that their benevolent disinterestedness and unambiguous conduct in the discharge of their arduous duties, did not, at an earlier period, serve as an example to other labourers in the same field, whose mischievous doctrines, founded upon party feeling and political subserviency, have so long proved inimical to the more general advancement of Christianity in this quarter of the world. Whatever may be the merits of the Methodists in respect of industry, and devotion to the cause in which they are engaged, we fear they cannot be exempted from the charge of sowing *tares* with their wheat: certain it is, that much of the restless

and turbulent spirit which has occasionally prevailed among the slaves in these settlements, may be attributed without breach of charity to their injudicious conduct, and the designs of some—and there have been many in this island who have found it *convenient* to enlist under their banners[1].

[1] Methodism, since it first took root in the *fields*, has, like the banian tree, we have had occasion to notice, extended its ramifications in all directions, affording benevolent shelter and rescue to thousands; but evil hands have trained it to an uncongenial soil, which has produced entangling filaments instead of majestic trunks, have defaced its natural beauties, and contaminated the sanctuary of its covering even to the parent stem. From the period when the sect was founded in 1729, to the present time, the career of their preachers has been marked by injudicious and unwarrantable interference in politics. Mr. Wesley himself set the example in numerous instances, in one of which the cause would probably have received a blow that might at least have taught them prudence thereafter, but for the bold interposition of a friend, who foresaw the consequences. We allude to a pamphlet entitled "A calm Address to the American Colonies," written by Mr. Wesley, the whole impression of which his friend in America destroyed or sent back to England. However, no sooner had the Americans obtained their independence, than Mr. Wesley, who had hitherto branded them with the name of *rebels*, sent a congratulatory address on their freedom from "*the state and the hierarchy*," exhorting them to "stand firm in that liberty with which God had so strangely made them free." By such injudicious conduct, the name of "Methodist" has too extensively acquired a correspondent signification to that applied to a sect of empirics, the followers of Thessalus, whom Galen opposed "because their methodistical heresy ruined every thing that was good in nature

It is by no means our wish to impugn the motives of men, who mistake the workings of an indiscreet zeal for the guidance of inspiration, or the dictates of duty; but it is impossible to avoid contrasting the conduct of the Methodists with that of the equally zealous, but less ostentatious Moravians, who commenced their ministry at a time when the slave trade, by its constant fresh introduction of Africans, was operating as a check upon the diffusion of moral feeling in the community, and from its increasing popularity was every day becoming a more formidable barrier to the anticipated results of their laudable designs. It was not until 1783, that the Methodists had so far established themselves in this island as to build a chapel, although as early as 1760, a society had been formed to the number of 200, under the auspices of a Mr. Nathaniel Gilbert, who evinced his zeal and sincerity in the cause, by holding weekly prayer-meetings in his own house, and afterwards by preaching the Gospel to the slaves; and in 1778, an accession of strength to the society was acquired by the arrival of a Mr.

and art;" hence too, a growing indifference for religious sentiment, concealed under the sacred name of *toleration*.

Baxter, a methodist preacher, who likewise followed the worldly calling of a shipwright in the dock-yard at English Harbour. Within a year afterwards the society amounted to 600, and in 1787 to 2000. In the preceding year, Dr. Coke with three other missionaries, being on their voyage from England to Nova Scotia, and having been ten weeks at sea, made for this island, where they determined to remain and work their mission. The doctor, who has given to the public an account of his visit to this and other West Indian settlements, in speaking of the owners of estates in Antigua, bears ample testimony to their zealous endeavours to enlarge the bounds of religious toleration.

Antigua has several times suffered from hurricanes, particularly in 1681, 1707, 1740, 1772, 1780 and 1792. In 1689, a dreadful earthquake destroyed almost every dwelling and sugar work in the island, and in 1769 nearly the whole town of St. John's was consumed by fire.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MONSERRAT—DESCRIPTION OF THE ISLAND—PLYMOUTH—JUDICATURE OF THE WEST INDIES—FOUR AND HALF PER CENT DUTIES—A COSMETIC—ENGLISH HARBOUR, ANTIGUA.

" Come,—I have learn'd, that fearful commenting
Is leaden servitor to dull delay;
Delay leads impotent and snail-pac'd beggary:
Then fiery expedition to my wing."

Richard III.

THE island of Monserrat, which lies about twenty-four miles S. W. of Antigua, is also under the Leeward Island government. Its mountainous character, and probably some resemblance, induced Columbus to give it the name of a mountain near Barcelona in Spain. It is a larger island than Nevis, containing about 30,000 acres, although infinitely less productive, owing to the obstacles to extended cultivation, and a comparatively inferior soil; but the varied succession of hill and valley, and precipitous mountains, densely clothed with

wild fertility, afford some of the most enchanting scenes that are to be found within the tropics. The period of its settlement has been noticed in the historical sketch of Saint Christopher, the settlers consisting principally of some Irish Roman Catholics, who, while associated with the English and French colonists of that island, had on several occasions, asserted their claims to the distinction due to the family of the Rocks; but with so little benefit to themselves, beyond the mere pleasure of "a little bit of fun," that they, at length, found it more suitable to prospective advantages, to form a league offensive and defensive in "some dear little isle of their own;" and following the example of the Barbadians in their location, who have instituted a sort of exclusiveship among themselves, by styling their island "Little England," they conferred upon Monserrat the name of "Little Ireland;" at the same time, from one of those inexplicable blunders, or that principle of inversion which is so characteristic of the Irish character, and which, according to Vallancy, caused them to select the devil for a saint, under the name of Patrick, the settlers of Monserrat gave to their

capital the English name of Plymouth; the only resemblance to which renowned sea-port is the existence of a break-water—*on the beach*, which defies the sagacity of every adventurer to effect a *dry* landing, until after he has got through the surf. The island is certainly beautiful, whether seen from the sea *en masse*, or in its fascicular details, and so far, with its reputed healthiness, excusably called by the natives, the Montpelier of the West Indies. But of the town—Shakspeare speaks of the *last* syllable of recorded time—give the name of Plymouth a monosyllabic character, and it may stand for the penultima with a *full stop*. It has the stamp of a discredited builder, who has gone beyond his capital in the expense of stone and mortar, and who would gladly dispose of the carcases for half the amount of his outlay. The people of Monserrat, nevertheless, live very cozily together, papists and protestants dovetail in felicitous reciprocation, to a degree which brings their opinions and creeds to that happy state of convergence, which might defy the most determined syllogist to give them a distinctive character; and, perhaps, nothing could more clearly evince the ascendency

of a feeling of unanimity among them than the fact, with one exception, up to 1823, so accordant had their notions of equity been among themselves, that a chancery suit had not been instituted for seven or eight years, and the grand jury had twice presented the Court of Chancery as *a nuisance*[1]. The fact is, that in all these islands, the Court of Chancery being composed, in some instances, of the governor as sole chancellor, and in others of the members of the council, the governor being only *primus inter pares*, the administration of justice, "as it is less dignified, is also more uncertain, and is in general distrusted and hated, in a degree commensurate with its power of doing mischief in the colony[2]." We must, indeed, express surprise, that the first act of the imperial Parliament, after the abolition of the slave trade in 1808, or the passing of the registry bill in 1817[3], was not the establishment of an efficient judicature in all these colonies. It would have done more towards humanising the discordant

[1] Third Report of the commissioners of inquiry into the administration of civil and criminal justice in the West Indies.

[2] Ibid. [3] 59 Geo. III. c. 120.

elements of the different communities, alleviating the distress of the planters, and ameliorating the condition of the slave population, than any measure that could have been projected by the most ardent advocate for colonial reform[1].

The British government, in persisting in the continuance of drawing from the old colonies the impost of four and a half per cent on their produce, a tax which has been justly declared by Lord Brougham, "beyond others the most injurious to the subject, in proportion to the benefit it produces to the government, of any recorded in the history of taxation;" might in justice, and consistently with its declared object, have provided salaries sufficient to support the dignity, and to remunerate the services of efficient persons educated for the profession of the law; whilst the ceded colonies, which are exempt from this inquisitorial tax, and whose physical resources are so eminently superior to the older settlements, whose lands have been so far exhausted as to re-

[1] The reports of the commissioners of legal inquiry were made in 1826; and up to this moment, no effective measures have been taken by the colonial department to establish an efficient judicature in these islands.

quire increased labour and expense in cultivation, ought to make a corresponding provision for their law officers [1]. In the Chief Justice of Antigua, we found a gentleman who had been educated for the bar in England, and who had gained his elevation through a practice of many years in the island; and although the assistant Judges were, as in the other islands, private individuals, they were generally men of education and intelligence. But the

[1] Upwards of six millions, being three times more than the fee-simple value of the lands, has been levied and raised under this tax from the old islands. It was, in the first instance, a voluntary subsidy made by the early colonists to the crown for the support of the colonial government, the building and maintenance of forts, &c. It was conceded at a time when the islands were in a state of adolescent fertility, when the restrictions upon trade, and heavy duties did not press so heavily on the planters—but the most serious ground of complaint, is the gross and continued misapplication of the fund so raised. The ceded colonies of Demerara, Berbice, and Essequibo, now comprehended under the name of British Guiana, Dominica, Saint Lucia, Grenada, Saint Vincent, and Tobago, are exempt from this impost, by virtue of a judgment obtained in the Court of King's Bench against the Crown, at the instance of the colonists of Grenada, who resisted an imposition founded upon a voluntary concession on the part of other communities. In November 1830, his present Majesty was graciously pleased to announce to Parliament, that he abandoned all claims to the West India duties, but this odious and partial tax continues to this moment unrepealed, and the recommendations of the commissioners employed to inquire into the administration of civil and criminal justice in the West Indies, remain nearly a dead letter.

constitution of the several courts in other respects was no less objectionable.

It was always with regret that our visits to Monserrat were of so short duration, as to restrain our curiosity from penetrating further into the country, than the residence of the worthy president, who is domiciled within a short distance from the town; the reputation of the Souffrière, and the surpassing beauty of the scenery in the approach to it, alone sufficing to provoke a longer sojourn.

In the name of the Junones, and all the goddesses ancient and modern, we confess, dear ladies of the Antilles, we have done you injustice: Let music strike up, liberate your affections from the thraldom of listlessness, let your fair forms, which seem tutored in the Pyrrhic school of Sparta, yield to the ardent longings of your impassioned souls, and let us behold you once again, uplifted in the mazy dance. It is then, indeed, you are yourselves,

> Venus herself attends upon you there,
> And Cupid sports amid the jocund train.

With one exception, only *one*, and that without disparagement, you are the most delightful partners

in a dance that ever gave us the heart-ache. Yes, Iberia's dark-eyed maidens,—but, pshaw, those days are gone!

The Antillian ladies have had credit for the use of a cosmetic, whose application is to be regarded only as a refinement upon self-persecution to which tight-lacing bears no sort of comparison, and it appears to have been practised at one time more particularly by the ladies of Monserrat[1]. Having buried a quantity of *cashew* nuts for *nine* days, as a necessary charm, we presume, the corrosive oil contained in them was afterwards extracted, and laid lightly over the face and hands with a feather. One continued blister was thus raised over the whole surface, which gradually turned black, the head swelled to a prodigious size, and the patient, lying in one posture, unable to smile or speak, waited for several days a willing sufferer, till her hideous mask should fall off in flakes. The operation was not only painful but dangerous; one instance is mentioned of the sight having been lost

[1] Singleton's Description of the West India Islands, 1767.—"If any ladies should be offended at the relation," he observes, "I beg leave to say with the poet, '*Quæ capit illa facit.*'"

by an incautious application of the oil, but what will not pride attempt, walking in the train of folly. We believe the abominable practice has now wholly ceased.

Monserrat has not been exempt from the evils incidental to invasion, or from those awful visitations of Providence which have so frequently desolated these islands; but our limits do not admit of detailed particulars, which are not marked with any striking peculiarity.

About ten miles from Saint John's, Antigua, in the south-eastern quarter of the island, and nearly due south of the harbour of Parham on the opposite coast, are English Harbour, and the Bay of Falmouth, separated from each other, merely by a narrow isthmus. At the bottom of Falmouth Bay, is a village of the same name, where some of the earliest settlers established themselves. In later years it has derived its principal support from the increasing importance of English Harbour, which is exclusively appropriated to the reception of ships of war, and vessels connected with the public service, as well as from the vicinity of a garrison on the neighbouring heights. English harbour is

unquestionably as pretty and secure a retreat for shipping as is to be found in the West Indies, with all the convenience of a dock-yard, well constructed store-houses, and shelter from the surrounding heights, and a narrow entrance. From this anchorage, we sailed for Barbadoes under his Majesty's pendant, and after five days "wear and tear," tacking, and traverse sailing, to get to windward, we landed in "Little England."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

BARBADOES—LA BELLE SAUVAGE—BARBADOES PRIDE OR DOODLE-DOO—BRIDGETOWN—MR. CUNNINGHAM—THE BLIND BERWICK—THE COUNTRY—ROADS AND CATTLE—A BILL OF FARE—MELTED BUTTER—COOKS AND KITCHENS—AFTER-DINNER PETS—HELIOGABALUS AND HIS GUESTS.

"Come, let us dance and sing,
While Barbadoes' bells do ring,
Love scrapes the fiddle-string,
And Venus plays the lute."

Inkle and Yarico.

HAD we been alone, and allowed to yield to instinctive impulse, we had probably found ourselves on the quay of Bridgetown, Barbadoes, in that state of mental abstraction which has the effect of clothing the feelings and the perceptions, in a sort of *asbestos* envelop; and certainly, the prodigious heat of a vertical sun at the time, increased by reflection from a loose sandy soil; and the crowd of ragged negro boatmen, who appeared to have saved a few remnants of their attire by a timely plunge into the sea, might have satisfied a novice that fire-proof clothing was really essential to his

preservation. But the novelty of the scenery, the clamouring loquacity of boatmen and idlers, the laughing of negro wenches, and the hooting of cattle drivers, would not permit us to cogitate for a moment, to give our existence anteriority, and associate it with those who "moved, breathed, and had their being," in the days of that sagacious old rogue, Master Richard Ligon, who first gave notoriety to la belle Yarico, and who has left his history of the island of Barbadoes as an intelligent tombstone on himself; '*mors sceptra* Ligon*ibus æquat*,' says he, at the end of it.

"Tan away dere, tan away, let me hit him"—this was uttered by one of the boatmen, who was hastily following with clenched fists, another negro who was making his way through the crowd of black tatterdemalions that were idling on the beach, "Eh, ēh, who you hit?" replied the other, who now turned to face the braggart with corresponding effrontery, and at it they went with—*words* —"Who you call dem names, eh? who you call Ginny nigger?"—"Wharra for you curse me den?"—"I no curse you."—"Yes, you curse me, you no look for trouble, you no find he,

troubble nebber mek eeself."—Here at least a dozen voices joined in delectable discord in preventing a fight, whilst the belligerents showed a greater eagerness to close in combat, in proportion to the apparent certainty of being prevented, each with clenched fists and violent gesticulations, jumping to get a sight of the other over the heads of the pacificators, the one repeating his reproaches, the other vociferating with rage, "Only hear dat, only hear dat, he call me Ginny nigger;"—adding, with patriotic indignation—"I trūe Barbadian bārn, so help me Gād!" an amusing illustration of the reputed self-esteem of the Barbadians in respect to their birth-place; whence probably the poinciana pulcherrima has received the name of "Barbadoes' pride," not only from its beauty, but from its resemblance to the *sensitive* plant. It is also called *Doodle-doo*. Still were we influenced by retrospect as we proceeded; and half unconsciously giving an inquiring look about us for Sir Christopher Curry, we were readily reconciled to the identity of the spot in his absence, from the number of good-tempered Wowskis, who were laughing themselves black in the face, and from a few individuals we

might have taken for Inkles. The scene was all bustle and animation, such as we had not witnessed in any other of the British Islands, and the superiority of the buildings, the half English aspect of the shops, the regularity of the streets, and the indications of commercial activity, bespoke a favourable preamble to the "bill of rights" of the little Englishmen.

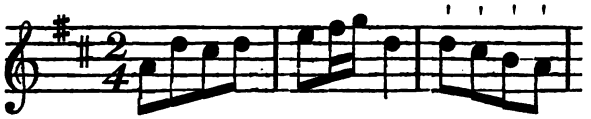
Bridgetown, from the sea, is lost behind the number of coco's and other trees which fringe the coast, and those planted in different parts of the town; and the island itself, seen from any distance, affords no definite features to excite lively interest in a visitor from the other colonies, owing to its slight elevation and the monotonous uniformity of its outlines, possessing no possible resemblance in its superficies, or affinity in its physical construction, to the islands in the Caribbean range. Nevertheless, a person first arriving at Barbadoes, would undoubtedly feast his sight bountifully on such a change of diet after a long voyage. The town was certainly abominably hot, as some of the seasoned gentry evinced by holding umbrellas over their heads, and one old gentleman on the beach had

also a large cool leaf of some plant stuck between his forehead and the lining of his hat, as an emolient to the os frontis. The reflection of the stone and *brick* buildings, and the regularity of the streets, which prevented the breezes being so discursive as they are among the unconnected dwellings in most towns, increased the calefactive influence amazingly.

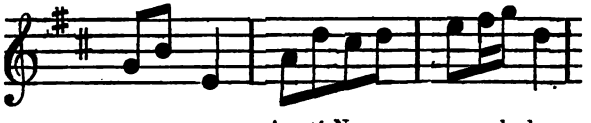
Barbadoes has not one harbour; Carlisle Bay, in front of Bridgetown, is an open roadstead, with not the best holding ground.

"And who in the name of fun and devilry is Mr. Cunningham?"

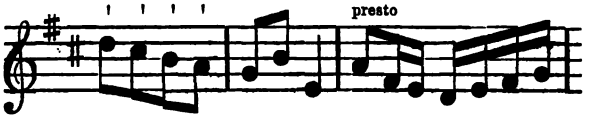
We put the question to a pretty Mulatto wench who was whiling away time at her needle, and singing *con multo sentimento*, at the door of *Miss* Betsy Austin's hostelry, where we took shelter with a parched palate that would have done credit to the dipsas, a serpent whose bite is celebrated for causing inveterate thirst. All the information we could gain was, that Mr. Cunningham was a hero of other days who had been immortalized in song, and while Miss Betsy prepared us some beverage, we prevailed on Miss Julia to sing it again, that we might commit piracy upon the composition.



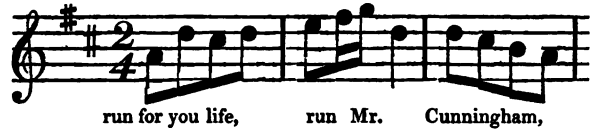
An-té Nanny, Open da door, Pa-ter want da



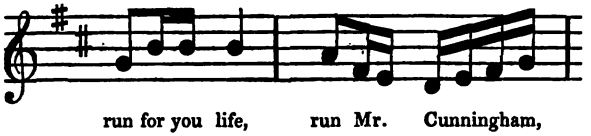
sour-sop soup, An-té Nanny, open da door,



Pa-ter want da sour-sop soup, Run, Mr. Cunningham,



run for you life, run Mr. Cunningham,



run for you life, run Mr. Cunningham,

run for you life, Pater da come wid a o-pen knife.

Anté Nanny, open da door,
Pater want da soursop soup,
Anté Nanny, open da door
Pater really want da soup.—(pause, *ad libitum*)
Run, Mr. Cunningham, run, run, run,
Run, Mr. Cunningham, run, run, run,
Run, Mr. Cunningham, run, run, run,
Pater da come wid a loaded gun!

What motive caused Aunt Nanny to close her door,—whether Mr. Cunningham had forestalled Peter in his soursop soup, which is probable enough —or whether the culprit runaway escaped with his life, is a point which derives all its interest, like a mummy, from the mysterious folds in which time has enveloped it.

His Majesty's ship Bustard arrived from Jamaica, after tacking for *forty days* against the trade-wind, causing more "wear and tear" to her hull and rigging, and more labour to her crew, than might have occurred in a voyage round the world, and she was obliged to go to Antigua to refit. This reminds us of the "*blind* Berwick," a merchant ship so named that was bound to Barbadoes, and found herself off Jamaica, having fortunately passed *between* the islands to windward without knowing it. There were many passengers on board—their friends

in Barbadoes had been long expecting their arrival —at length, information came that the Berwick had left England months before, every certainty of her loss appeared clearly established, suits of mourning were worn for the departed sufferers, when one morning the blind Berwick groped her way into Carlisle Bay.

In the vicinity, and within a short distance from Bridgetown, there are many charming little villas— models for the natives of the other islands to copy —and so engaging with their white faces, neat slate-coloured coverings—like pretty quakeresses— glazed sashes, entrance-gates, and all the appurtenances of comfort, so sweetly embowered amidst trees and shrubs, that the *vis corporis* and *vis mentis* become quite refreshed with the sight of them, after staggering under a hot sun. The face of the country has been extolled, but it admits of no comparison to the scenery in the other islands, where the mighty forms, the wild luxuriance and the varied tints of artless nature, towering above the clouds, and smiling at mortal prowess with disdain, with potent hand defines the boundaries of her secret haunts, and yields to industry and art an

ample portion of the treasures at her feet. Here she is beaten out of the field by culture, the slight inequalities of surface barely marking her footsteps in making her retreat. There is an elevation in one part of the island which bears the name of Scotland, which we may suppose to be her portmanteau left in the hurry of departure, but her wardrobe is so extensive, and she has such excellent credit with her milliner, that the Barbadians are safe from an action of trover for its recovery. The roads are discreditable to the colony, and as for your cattle, gentlemen of Barbadoes, surely you imported them from Lilliput, they are the oddest little animals in the shape of oxen, we ever beheld; we bethought ourselves of Cinderella's coach with harnessed mice, on beholding one of your carts drawn at funereal pace by no less than sixteen of them [1]. Nevertheless the Barbadians are esteemed good planters, and they have justly acquired credit for a liberal and humane policy in the treatment of their slaves, who stand in a higher scale of improvement than those of any other colony

[1] In Ligon's time, *camels* were in use in Barbadoes; the change is a singular transposition from the sublime to the ridiculous.

we have visited, Antigua, perhaps, excepted; and the Danish island of Santa Cruz is worthy of comparison.

In the early period of her history, Barbadoes had her share of internal dissension; and during the Protectorate, when the executive power and most of the leading members of the community declared themselves staunch royalists, the island was compelled to capitulate to the parliamentary forces under Sir George Ayscue, but she stands in the singular position among these islands, of never having surrendered to a foreign foe. Her prosperity, which is, perhaps, unparalleled in colonial history, has consequently been unchecked by those international changes, which have so frequently brought distress upon the colonists in the neighbouring settlements.

We certainly passed an agreeable time among the inhabitants of Little England, whose hospitality is in perfect accordance with their ample catering, a qualification which appears to have descended in a right line from the days of Master Ligon.

"Give me leave," says he, "to show what feasts they can (when they will) make for their friends upon the plantations, which, that

I may the better doe, I will make two bills of fare; the one for an inland plantation, the other for a plantation near the sea, of such meat and such plenty of that, as I have seen and eaten of, at either of these plantations. First then (because beefe being the greatest rarity in the island) I will begin with it, and of that sort there are three dishes at either messe, a rompe boyl'd, a chine roasted, a large piece of the breast roasted, the cheeks bak'd, of which is a dish to either messe, the tongue and part of the tripes minc't for pyes, season'd with sweet herbs finely minc't, suet, spice, and currans; the legges, pallets, and other ingredients for an olio podrido to either messe, a dish of marrow-bones; so here are fourteen dishes at the table and all of beefe: and this he intends as the great regalio to which he invites his fellow-planters; who having *well eaten of it*, the dishes are taken away, and another course brought in, which is a potato pudding, a dish of Scots collops of a leg of porke, as good as any in the world, a fricacy of the same, a dish of boyl'd chickens, a shoulder of a young goat drest with his blood and tyme, a kid with a pudding in his belly, a sucking-pig, which is there the fattest, whitest, and sweetest in the world, with the pognant sauce of the brains, salt, sage, and nutmeg, done with claret wine; a shoulder of mutton, which is there a rare dish; a pasty of the side of a young goat, and a side of a fat young shot upon it, well seasoned with pepper and salt, and with some nutmeg; a loyne of veal, to which there wants no sauce, being so well furnisht with oranges, lymons, and lymes; three young turkies in a dish; two capons, of which sort I have seen some extreame large and very fat; two henns with eggs in a dish; four ducklings; eight turtle-doves, and three rabbits; and for cold bak't meats, two Muscovie ducks larded, and season'd well with pepper and salt: and these being taken off the table, *another course* is set on, and that is of Westphalia or Spanish bacon, dried neats' tongues, botargo, pickled oysters, caviare, anchovies, olives, and (intermixt with these) custards, creams, some alone, some with preserves of plantains, bananas, guavers put in, and those preserved alone by themselves; cheesecakes, puffs, which are to be made with English flower and bread; sometimes tansies, some-

times froizes or amulets; and for fruite, plantains, bonanoes, guavers, milions, prickled peare, anchovie peare, prickled apples, custard apples, water milions, and pines, with all that went before. To this meat you seldom faile of this drink; mobbie, beveridge, brandy, *kill devil*, (rum) drink of the plantain, claret wine, white wine, and Renish wine, sherry, canary, red-sack, wine of Fiall, and all spirits that come from England; and with all this, you shall find as cheerfull a look, and as hearty a welcome, as any man can give to his best friends; and so much for a feast of an *inland* plantation. Now for a plantation near the sea"—

But spare us, pray spare us further recital,

Who would suppose, from Adam's simple ration,
That cookery could have call'd forth such resources?

Ligon's directions for slaughtering a turtle are so exquisitely picturesque, that we cannot resist the opportunity of increasing their publicity:—

"When you are to kill one of these fishes, the manner is to lay him on his back on a table, and when he sees you come with a knife in your hand to kill him, he vapours out the grievousest sighes that ever you heard any creature make, and sheds as large tears as a stag, that has a far greater body and larger eyes. He has a joynt or crevis about an inch within the utmost edge of his shell, which goes round about his body from his head to his tail, on his belly side; into which joynt or crevis, you put your knife, beginning at the head, and so rip up that side, and then do as much to the other; then lifting up his belly, which we call his *callipee*, we lay open all his bowels, and taking them out, come next to his heart, which has three distinct poynts, but all meet above where the fat is; and if you take it out, and lay it in a dish, it will stir and pant ten hours after the fish is dead. Sure, there is no

creature on earth, nor in the seas, that *enjoyes life with so much sweetness and delight* as this poor fish the turtle; nor none more delicate in taste, and more nourishing than he."

This is *almost* equal to the sentimental savageness of Isaac Walton, who directs you, in thrusting your fish-hook into the very entrails of a worm or frog, to "*treat the creature kindly.*"

But the worthy old disciple of Epicurus does not inform us if the Barbadian cooks of those days could manage "melted butter," or whether the solar heat, reducing the butter itself to a colliquative state, caused it to resist commixture with the flour. At almost every table, and in every island, we found this lubricative auxiliary in the concoction of food a desideratum, and their fish, which is really excellent, subjected to posthumous insult in the mockery of a rite which appertains to decent sepulture, by the substitution of thin flour and water, or butter in the state of oil; and the aforesaid reason was always assigned as an excuse. It is true the butter, which chiefly comes from Ireland, yields to the influence of climate, and becomes soft, but the precaution taken by the importers and the store-keepers, usually preserves it

from fluxion. The secret lies in the well known saying,

God sends meat, but the devil sends cooks;

and in these islands, the latter have redoubtable sway in disturbing all the established principles, the offspring of vast study and research, which the science of gastronomy has propounded to meliorate the condition of mankind. Few persons ever think of interposing in the decretory judgment of a negro cook, and if the attempt be made, the cook as little thinks of following a suggestion; he must make his fire, mix his compounds, apply the caloric, regulate the ordeal after his own fashion; it would be madness to caution him in making melted butter, to give the alembic a rotatory motion with *or* against the sun, it would be with *and* against the sun in a moment; aye, if the whole solar system was in jeopardy, and utter destruction to the universe was to follow; or to tell him to mix the flour and butter together into a paste before the caloric is applied, by way of forcing them into compact, for that was *our* plan, would inevitably cause your melted butter to appear on table in the shape of a *hard*

dumpling. You smile, good reader, at our talking of melting butter; Achilles deemed it no way derogatory to make a hash, and to spit his meat, whilst his courtiers busied themselves in the kitchen in preparing entertainment for the ambassadors of Agamemnon. Experience hath given us a few hints in such matters, and that inflexible taskmaster, Necessity, hath stood our preceptor in following her suggestions.

We must certainly give the West Indian cooks credit for some share of sagacity in their culinary operations, considering the structure of their kitchens, which appears to have been rigidly followed in all the islands we visited, from an archetype in the first dawn of civilization. We have noticed elsewhere that they are detached from the dwellings, consisting of a simple brick or stone wall, embracing an area of fifteen to twenty feet in length and ten in breadth, with an inclined tiled roof, unglazed windows,—each with one ill-made wooden shutter, commonly hanging from the top, and protruded at the bottom by a stick: and a chimney or hole in the roof as an additional outlet for the smoke and steam. A brick or stone plat-

form raised from the floor, about three feet high and as many feet broad, runs longitudinally on one side, and on this a wood fire is made, the roasting spit working on two large logs of wood on each side, flanked by as many saucepans as may be needful; and you might as well call upon your black *artiste* to solve a problem in Euclid, as to get him to comprehend, or at least to use, more recondite machinery. To introduce to him a kitchen-range, and tell him he would, in time, know how to use it, would infallibly gain his approbation, and you might, the next day, enjoy the satisfaction of having your *dispatch* cocks on table in *less time* than heretofore, with the *certain conviction* that they did not taste so much of the wood fire. "Well, Sampson, you like the kitchen-range?"—"Yes, massa, him clebber ting, aw like um berry well—aw do da fowl quick, Massa."—"To be sure you do, and they taste better."—"Yes, Massa, um taste better."—"And you've less trouble."—"Yes, Massa, aw no trubble at āll."—"Well, you ought to be very proud of it, you're the only cook in the island—in all the islands—that has such a thing, and knows how to use it."—"Yes, Massa, aw

berry proud, him reälly clebber ting." Such might be your colloquy with your cook, and no less proud yourself of such a triumph over prejudice, you arrest the attention of your first visitor to witness the sledge-hammer blow,—worthy of Sampson himself, —which you have given to culinary statu-quoism. Prepare thyself for a retection upon entering your kitchen, that will bring the hammer with the effect of a battering-ram upon thy assured felicity. "How you do, Massa? here he is, aw hab dem fioung run-way debbils in de *jail*, all ready fu de pit (spit) dey no can 'scape dem iron bar." You find your kitchen range covered over with pieces of plank, to secure within the bars half a dozen fowls, pleading *in formâ pauperis*, to be relieved from a prefatory ordeal of fire and smoke, to which they have been condemned, by way of initiation for the lighted faggots that are to *dispatch* them to the table after the old fashion; and having cursed, sworn, remonstrated, thus keeping the risible muscles from sympathizing with the titillating sensation of the fifth pair of nerves within you, irresistibly excited by ludicrous fancy, your *re*instruction gains further assurance from Sampson that he understands

"berry well," and that you may expect to find your range in prescribed operation "when da fowl hab teeth," a very pertinent aphorism of the negroes, in all matters which appear to them beyond the focus of probability. They are all alike, they are as thoughtless, forgetful, and as tiresome as children, and as pertinacious as profound metaphysicians—but then, they are so irresistibly amusing, that while their perverseness provokes anger, their fantoccini of absurdity commonly arrests its judgment. In attempting to instruct them, the principle suggested by Pope, is worthy of adoption:

> "Man must be taught, as if you taught him not,
> And things ne'er known, propos'd as things forgot."

Happily, the West Indians are pretty well relieved of a custom which is too common in England, and which, although excusable and natural, because dictated by the endearing attachment of parents to their children, is, in our opinion, extremely injudicious, and in most instances, defeats the object intended. We allude to introducing children at table after dinner. It was not often we witnessed it; the climate, the mosquitoes, and sand-flies, and their

gambols with the black servants, who stuff them with cakes and fruit during the day, weary their little souls by sunset, and they go to bed. Imagine, for instance, a party of twenty or thirty persons at table, just relieved of the presence of as many black servants, and the steam of the departed viands; still oozing from every pore, as if seated in a vapour bath, and coveting every breath of cool air that can find its way through the open windows: imagine, we say, at this moment of anticipated felicity—and perhaps in amiable reciprocation with some fair model of woman's form at thy side,—half a dozen urchins tripping into the room, unconsciously stopping the flow of rational conversation, that they may dabble in the puddles of small talk; their little eyes goggling for sweets, their vanity raised to the highest pitch by praise, their temper afterwards soured by rebuke, and each of them in turn taking possession of your knee, or pertinaciously resisting all enticement to depart from it, owing to the vicinity of a favourite sweetmeat, or because you happened to play at bowls with the little gentlemen in the morning. You have no other resource than to stuff him, and make him tipsy as fast as pos-

sible, that his mama may have him taken away. Heaven bless their dear little souls, we love to hear their prattle, and to witness their innocent gambols, and would freely undertake for any lady-mother, to play at leap-frog with them, stand on our head, swallow knives and forks, and eat fire, to amuse them at any other time, but we protest against a practice, which cuts at the very root of colloquial pleasure, and in affording short-lived felicity to the youngsters, endangers their health by repletion, and too often their disposition by begetting frowardness. Besides, they enjoy their cakes, and apples, and sugar-plums tenfold, cutting them up into geese and turkeys, among themselves. Heliogabalus, the Roman Emperor, who took great pleasure in domestic lions and leopards, usually introduced them with the third course for the amusement of his guests; placing them betwixt each of the invited, a man and a beast alternately—this was a sensible sort of thing, the beasts might be petted and praised without affecting their temper or their morals, their capacious stomachs were barely tickled by the conciliating *bonne-bouche;* and

for a *drinking* party, the design of the emperor-host was eminently felicitous, from its establishing co-ordination among his guests.

The fruit produced in Barbadoes is very indifferent, but large quantities are imported from Demerara and Antigua. The black queen-pine of the latter island, unquestionably merits all that has been said in praise of this exquisite fruit, and we doubt if its melons are surpassed in flavour, certainly not in size, by those of Malomacca, one of the seven isles in front of Venice. The Caribs bestowed great pains on the culture of the pine-apple, which they esteemed above any other of their fruits.

Barbadoes is between twenty-one and twenty-two miles in length and fourteen in breadth, and contains 106,470 acres, the greater part under cultivation. Such was the rapid progress to independence and wealth on the part of the colonists in this island, that, according to the statement of a French officer, who landed here in 1666, the Governor's establishment was upon the most splendid scale, and its effective military force was estimated

at from eighteen to twenty thousand infantry, and near three thousand cavalry, mounted mostly by the merchants—and in 1670, the population had increased to 50,000 whites, and 100,000 coloured people and slaves.

One of the most serious calamities experienced by the Barbadians was the introduction of ants by the ships from Africa, and which carried their ravages to such extent, that it was, at one time, seriously deliberated whether the island should not be abandoned. Every expedient human ingenuity could contrive, barely served to check the rapidity of their increase; but the same Providence which brought the plague upon the inhabitants effectually relieved them of it in a few hours. The hurricane of 1780 completely annihilated the vermin;—whose edaciousness has been instanced in a return made to the Ordnance Department; wherein a whole *brigade* of light field *brass ordnance* was stated to have been devoured by them!

CHAPTER XXIX.

PACKETS AND MAIL-BOATS—SAINT VINCENT—WINDWARD COAST—TROPICAL SCENERY—KINGSTOWN—ANTILLIAN TAVERNS—LAYOU VALLEY—JUMBE ROCK—RUTLAND VALE—PALMISTE PARK—THE BATH.

"Who can forbear to smile with nature? Can
The stormy passions in the bosom roll,
While every gale is peace, and every grove
Is melody?"

"TRIFLES light as air," make up much of the sum total of human felicity, and there are none more gratifying in the reciprocal relations of life, than those interchangeable, gratuitous, and disinterested observances, those simple acts of courtesy and accommodation to strangers, which scarce impose any other obligation than that which belongs to the party making the concession, and which are known to spring from the intuitive deductions of a mind that is not warped by selfishness and pride. With the conviction on one's mind that such an obliga-

tion belongs to those principles which moral philosophy inculcates, and that by imparting gladness to others, it is reflected back with genial warmth to our own bosoms, we remove at once the obstacles to a more active and enlarged benevolence in our general intercourse with society; whose practical results would arrest the progress of many a congenial soul hurrying away from the deformities of humanity to take refuge in misanthropy, and bring him back to his starting point, to expatiate with gladness on the beauties of an original picture, which had only been defaced by accumulated cobwebs and dust. Certain it is, that Englishmen in general, in their intercourse with strangers, bear with them the stamp of selfishness and pride, under the mask of national reserve, which distinguishes them from most other people; but we must give credit to the Anglo-West Indians for a greater share of open-hearted frankness, and a more active benevolence in this respect, than generally characterize their transatlantic brethren.

Having failed in procuring a vessel to convey us to Saint Vincent direct, we had resigned ourselves to the alternative of waiting the arrival of the

packet from England[1]. We were, however, relieved from this state of anxiety by an act of civility on the part of a merchant of Saint Vincent, of whom we had no previous knowledge, in the offer of his own sloop, for which act of gratuitous liberality, he would receive no other acknowledgment than our thanks. We embarked and quitted Carlisle Bay as the sun was setting immediately in the direction of our route. The high land of Saint Vincent may be discerned on a clear day from Barbadoes, from which it is distant about ninety miles, the course being W. ½ S. to bring you to the southern extreme of the island, where the town of

[1] The route of the Leeward Islands' packet with the *second* monthly mail from England, has already been given, (vide Vol. I. p. 129.) The packet with the *first* mail in each month, called the Jamaica packet goes direct to that island, stopping only at Barbadoes to leave the mails for the Caribbee Islands, which are afterwards conveyed in mail-boats, excepting those for Saint Vincent and Granada, which are also left by the packet, those islands lying immediately in her track. Persons embarking for the West Indies by this conveyance, should therefore select the *second* packet in the month (vide Vol. I. p. 27) if bound for either for the Caribbee Islands, whither they would be conveyed direct, without having to shift their luggage, as would be required if they selected the first or Jamaica packet, and to experience the inconvenience of proceeding from Barbadoes in the small boats that convey the mails.

Kingstown is situated; but whether from bad steering during the night, no uncommon thing with coloured and negro *captains*, or the influence of a current, at daylight we found "the Ariel" far to windward of her prescribed course. *We* were disposed to thank the little fairy for a freak of fancy which had brought us to the north, instead of the south end of the island, affording us an opportunity of tracing the whole eastern or windward line of coast, which presented to us features of scenery, or rather of effect, which we had not witnessed in always passing on the *leeward* side of these islands. At daylight the base of Saint Vincent was still below the horizon, and that portion of it visible to us, presented only one indefinite outline, embodying a deep grey tint below a dense mass of clouds which crowned its summits; but as we approached, and the sun cast its expanded beams on the whole palpable surface, the variety of beautiful forms and tints, the constant changes in the position of some objects, and the intervention of others, as we passed rapidly along the coast under a stiff but favourable breeze, excited feelings of such lively and rapturous interest, as cannot easily be forgotten. The bright

and verdant cane-fields, rising in gentle acclivity from the shores in broad elongated forms, might be compared to a heap of green and yellow ribands, held up by an invisible hand amidst the clouds; the intervening spaces, defined by the deep chasms or ravines, which run in the same direction. The clouds above were all in commotion, recoiling from the currents of the trade wind, which were passing under their bases, and again yielding to the attraction of the mountains, one moment disclosing and the next concealing, as if by enchantment, some of the most beautiful and romantic spots in nature, until they should pass to the leeward side of the island summit, and there rest in calmness and repose, or yield their refreshing exhalations on languishing vegetation. But the most striking singularity on the windward coasts of these islands, is the forms which the coast itself, and vegetative nature especially, acquire from the constant operation of the trade-winds, blowing, with trifling variation, in one direction. The shores have become more rugged and abrupt by yielding to the incessant ravages of the sea, which at times breaks with terrific violence over their ramparted

sides; whilst the unchangeable direction of the wind, giving to vegetation a correspondent inclination in its growth, produces an effect which seems at variance with established principles. The trees, in the immediate vicinity of the coast are stunted, and their branches, on the east side, partially shorn of their leaves; and even in a dead calm, from the cause we have assigned, they still appear bending beneath some invisible power; whilst the scanty herbage and shrubs which skirt the cliffs, seem to be clinging to, rather than growing out of the earth that supports them. Nevertheless, the windward country in all these islands is the most verdant and fertile; the prevailing sea breezes lenifying the solar influence, which frequently to leeward imposes a staggering oppression of heat, and saps the soil; whilst to windward, the saline particles rather impart a vivifying principle to cultivation; and the heavily charged clouds meeting with resistance from the mountains, disperse more frequent showers, and produce a freshness and verdancy over the whole face of nature.

Perhaps in no part of the world, is the mind or the imagination more powerfully affected by the

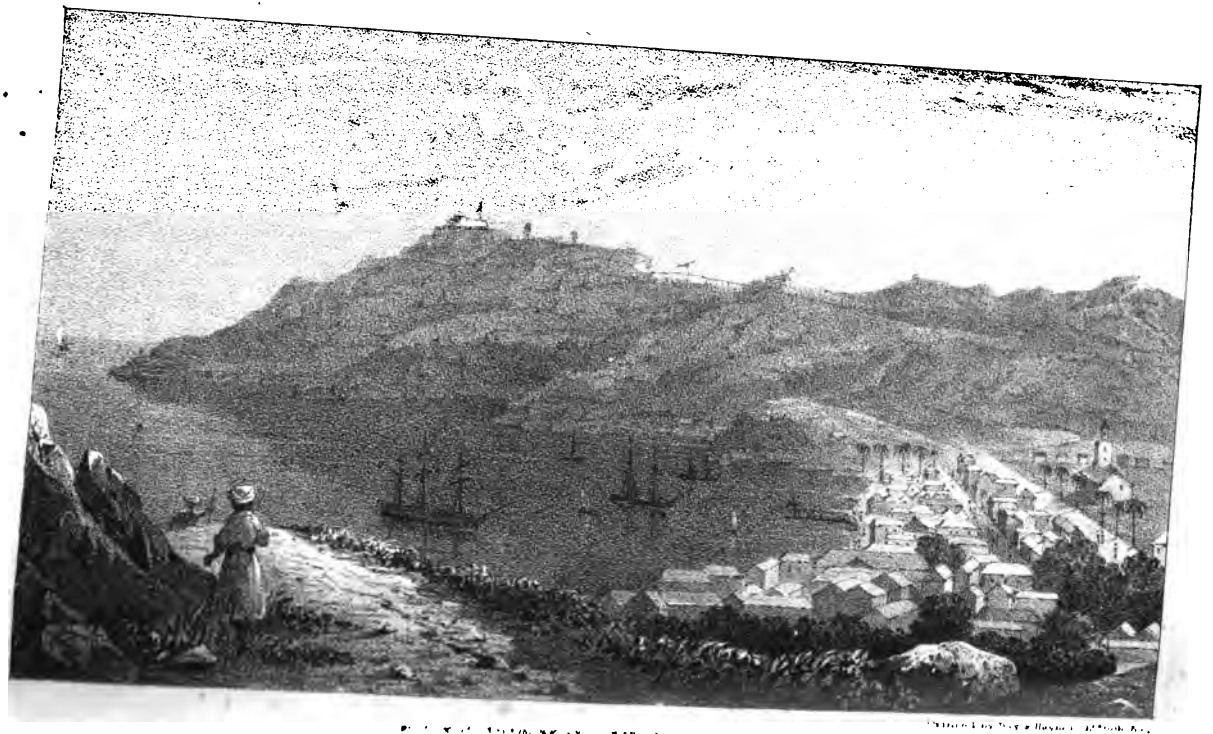
mysteries of scenic effect than within the tropics. Even Italy, so celebrated for the beauty of its scenery, and the purity and genial temperature of its climate, cannot boast of those inexhaustible details, those grand and prominent features, those profound combinations of effect, which belong to the torrid zone, and which, to the ardent admirer of nature, cause at times the *vocem faucibus hærere*, and every mental operation, to be suspended in one long pause of intellectual adoration. In the comparison between her *presence*, if we may so express ourselves, in the tropics and in Italy, we may say in the words of the poet, they are both

> " Graceful, yet each with different grace they move,
> This striking sacred awe, that softer winning love."

In Italy she is beautiful in a sort of effeminate languor, reclining in her calmest and tamest moods—

> " ever *unchangingly* bright,
> Like the long sunny lapse of a summer's day-light,
> Shining on, shining on, by no shadow made tender,
> Till love falls asleep in the sameness of splendour."

In the tropics she is incomparably grand; there she may be said to hold her court, asserting the



majesty of her dominion in her sublimest attitudes, robed in her richest paraphernalia, and sparkling in "gems," amidst the fervid glow of a torrid sun; and those tremendous *flourishes* of thunder and lightning, hurricanes and earthquakes, which so frequently announce her presence, have a prodigious effect in reminding you of your allegiance.

After sailing along the fascinating coast we have attempted to describe, and passing the village of Calliaqua, which lies at the bottom of a bay of the same name, you luff round a bluff point, and Kingstown and the shipping at the anchorage open upon the sight. The town is prettily situated along the sandy beach of a deep bay, which is well sheltered by a range of high mountains in the background, that stretch into the sea on each side, forming a capacious amphitheatre. On the right wing, which presents a bold precipitous termination, Fort Charlotte, with its extensive outposts, holds a commanding position; and the fortifications on Dorchester-Hill, in the rear of the town, with a battery on the promontory to the left, constitute an effective defence. The more general use of stone in the buildings, and a more liberal use of

paint about the wooden materials, than is customary in most of the islands, give a prepossessing appearance to the town. The Court-house, of which the one at Antigua is the archetype, faces the beach, on one side of a square space shaded by trees, where the market is held, the two streets which the town defines, running in a parallel direction with the beach on each side from this point. Behind the court-house is the best constructed jail we had any where seen; and the church, which is more remarkable for the enormous cost of its erection than for elegance of design, stands in an isolated position nearly in a line with these buildings, towards the western extremity of the town.

All the taverns we had visited in the Antilles were conducted by *Miss* somebody, which seemed to indicate that the office strictly appertained to the sagacity and intelligence of the fair sex; and experience confirmed us in this deduction. Certainly, an instance of usurpation occurred at Antigua, where our little round-bodied hostess, Kitty Lynch, was succeeded by a tall attenuated sample of humanity of the other gender; but the thing was absurd; he stood at his door with his hands in

his pockets, as a repellant *sign* to every sagacious wayfarer. If perchance you meet with such a phenomenon, good reader, as a West Indian tavern, kept by a man, avoid it, if there is another to be found—there is nothing attractive about it; your necessities need anticipation, your appetite requires stimulants and coaxing, and there is that instinctive eloquence in the female voice, and especially in the fine drawn wheedling of a mulatto hostess, that at once tickles you into good humour with every thing about her—her amiable familiarity places you upon a footing of equality in a moment, which seldom fails to give assurance that obligation on both sides is reduced to that perfect equipoise, which could only be fairly established by weighing with scrupulous exactness your accommodation, against the amount of your bill. We had not been ten minutes in the hostelry of Miss Mary Moore in the town of Kingstown aforesaid, before she was expostulating with maternal sympathy, upon the expediency of putting us to bed, with a sudorific after a recipé of her own, in order to overcome fatigue and stiff limbs, from sitting up all the night on the deck of the Ariel. "Dō, my good gentlemān!—you

reālly wōn't be quite thè thīng, till you're dr-ā-wn tru de sh-ē-ē-ts—and hab someting wārm"—And yet our self-denial was invincible. No, Miss Mary, we will dissect your "dispatch cock," and taste your Madeira—and then—and then we embarked in a long, narrow, ticklish thing called a canoe, that looked like a marrow-spoon, and required to be held by two or three negroes to prevent it upsetting, until its equilibrium was fairly adjusted by each person taking his seat. A worthy old inhabitant, who had an estate on the leeward coast, took us into custody to be conveyed to Layou Bay, and we were presently shut out from the town and shipping, and pulling along shore as fast as eight-man power could impel a bean-pod. The canoe literally gave us the idea; it was formed of the trunk of a tree, shaped like a wedge at the extremities, and excavated to a thinness that gave elasticity to the whole body as it was impelled forward with astonishing swiftness.

Sir William Young, formerly Governor of Dominica, some years ago, in the House of Commons, attempted to convey an idea of the mountainous and rugged character of that island, by rumpling

into numerous inequalities, a sheet of writing paper which he held in his hand; it has been over and over again mentioned as a very happy illustration, but we have no proof that it was "ordered to lie on the table," or that it is to be seen in a glass-case at the Colonial Office, as an ingenious model of one of the Antilles. We will, nevertheless, borrow the idea for the island of Saint Vincent, whose mountainous character is no less striking, but its inequalities are more massed, and its forms more perfect, than are those of Dominica. One connected chain of mountains runs the whole length of the island from north to south, breaking into subordinate masses on each side, and forming between them deep secluded valleys, some running in a lateral direction to the very verge of the coast, and others representing huge circular excavations, such as imagination pictures for brooding melancholy to covet. On the windward side of the island already noticed, the lands in some places fall with more gradual and uninterrupted declivities, admitting of a tolerable carriage road to the extent of nearly thirty miles from Kingstown, along the verge of the coast, but to leeward, twenty-four

miles from the same point, is the extent of an intricate and winding bridle-path, that in some places decussates the steep acclivities, at others leads through deeply embowered passes, and at intervals is lost in the bottom of the valleys, or in those frequent shallow rivulets that meander through the deep chasms or ravines which the mountain waters have formed during the long lapse of time they have continued to flow towards the sea. Hence, on this side of the island, the more general use of canoes, such as we have described, by persons living at any considerable distance from the capital; and we were conveyed over the smooth surface of the waters, a distance of eight miles, to the point of our debarkation, before we had half satisfied our appetite in admiring the splendid scenes that opened upon us at every headland.

About two-thirds the way up the valley of Layou we came to a remarkable rock, that spoke—pray, good reader, repress your astonishment, Shakspeare speaks of "sermons in stones," and the *dumb* rock of Derbyshire was considered a phenomenon [1]. But

[1] A young man who had a prodigious passion for natural curiosities, visited Derbyshire to see "the lions." He found the people

the rock of Layou Valley spoke—we have said so, and we cannot deviate from a resolution not to obliterate a word in our recital that comes fresh from the mine of thought with sufficient worth in it to bear assay—hence our vague, crude, and undigested style; we leave the alchymical ordeal to our critical readers, with the reasonable apprehension of consciousness that the refined product will not bear the stamp of *standard* value. It is true that we seriously meditated having our work "got up" by one of those numerous literary laundresses, who undertake to

ignorant that such "animals" were common in those parts, and the result of his inquiries every where indicated that he was taken for an idiot. An intelligent blacksmith was quite alive to that impression, and offered, as an equivalent, to show him the dumb-stone. A *dumb* stone was a startling phenomenon to his disappointed curiosity, but on arriving at the spot, sure enough there it was. The wily blacksmith explained on the way, that the singular property of this stone consisted of confining the sound of the voice of any person standing on it, to its own surface; and he made it quite clear to the astonished naturalist by mounting on the top of it, and hallooing as loud as a wide moving mouth could possibly betoken, but not a sound was heard. He now mounted it himself and shouted so lustily that the man of iron, half forgetting his purpose, had nearly cautioned him not to alarm the neighbourhood. "Well, the devil's in it if you did not hear that!"—"Aye, the devil *is* in it, take my word for it, no sound reached *my* ears," replied Vulcan. The youth took a sketch of the dumb-stone, rewarded the man for his *trouble*, and departed quite satisfied that Derbyshire contained at least *one* curiosity.

clear starch, and put manuscripts into small plaits to hide holes; but he persuaded us that our materials would not stand the ordeal, that he should only injure the texture, and that we really might venture to appear in public—*without being noticed.* He was a humane man; he would not insult our poverty with reproach, like him who heedlessly upbraided another with having a hole in his stocking. The reply was that of a philosopher, "A hole is the accident of a day," said he, "but a darn is premeditated poverty." This conviction on our own mind raised us at least three inches higher in a moment, and gave us confidence to meet the daylight of criticism—

——— "like a sail unfurl'd,
That shows its rents and patches to the world."

You may commiserate our condition, good reader, but we disdain to ask charity. But what has all this to do with the speaking rock at Layou? truly, nothing; —well, then, we say it spoke—yes, it spoke that silent language of association whose eloquence surpasseth the power of words; and as spell-bound attention gazed upon its features, certainly interesting but not handsome, with eight or ten heads of rather savage aspect, imagination and memory raked up the

dust of vanished centuries, to trace the footsteps of the race it spoke of, whom refined prejudice had denied a birth-right, and merciless oppression had swept from the face of the earth. It has been justly remarked by Lady Morgan, and history abounds with facts to confirm the assertion, that "conquered nations are always the subject of slander to their foreign masters, who seek to sanction their own injustice, by assuming the worthlessness of their victims;" and we are not without evidence, that the Caribs, and especially the more simple and inoffensive natives of Hispaniola, and the other western isles of this Archipelago, have borne an undue share of reproach which could only appertain to ignorance, to justify an unprovoked system of predatory warfare, as barbarous and impolitic as ever characterized the ignorant propensities of the worst of savages [1]. "It is a calumny against Providence," says the same writer, "and a solecism in philosophy, to assert that there are nations so marked by tendencies to evil, so instinctively de-

[1] Benzoni states, that of two millions of inhabitants contained in the island of Hispaniola alone, when it was discovered by Columbus in 1492, not more than 153 were alive in 1545.

voted to particular vices, that they remain irredeemable by good laws and wise institutions. The true instrument of man's degradation is his ignorance." But such arguments were not comprehended in the philosophy, or rather the depraved policy which governed the Spaniards, and after them the French, in wantonly extirpating the aboriginal inhabitants of these islands.

Of the Caribs, a mere remnant of their race survives in the islands of Dominica and Saint Vincent, where they are permitted to occupy within prescribed boundaries, a portion of the mountainous districts, too remote and inaccessible to excite the envy or even the attention of the more civilized inhabitants. These two islands belong to Great Britain; surely it would be worthy of her beneficence to remove these people from that state of indolence and ignorance in which they are immured; to take them under her provident care, and assign to them a more ample participation in those immunities, which an enlightened policy is now extending to the other inhabitants of her possessions in this part of the world.

The rock which has led to these observations,

The Jumbe Rock.

Saint Vincent

and which lies immediately between a narrow bridle path and a small stream that wind through the valley of Layou, was, no doubt, an idol of the Caribs, or probably a small family of idols, as it contains, on its upper surface, several rude representations of the human face and other figures [1]. It had been long concealed by surrounding brush-wood and thick matted vines over its surface, but the singular shape of the mass caused them to be cut away. The negroes went to work with the eagerness of wire-haired terriers at a rat-hole, but

[1] The religion of the Caribs, or rather the want of it, is not to be traced from any monuments, altars, or temples they have left behind them. They possessed a natural sentiment of a Divinity, or superior and obliging power, which resided in the heavens, and they also entertained a certain respect for the sun and moon, which they imagined to be animated bodies; but they manifested nothing like adoration towards a Supreme Governor of the universe, content in the apprehension that the power so vaguely recognised, enjoyed the delights of its own felicity without being offended at the ill actions of men, and that it was endued with so much goodness, that it did not take revenge even of its enemies. Numerous subordinate spirits were supposed by them to be more immediately connected with the conduct of mankind; one of them being assigned to each individual, to whom they made offerings of cassada bread and the first of their fruits. Their evil spirits were still more numerous, having also a supreme, or one more potent than the rest, whom they called *Maboya*, and to whom and his subordinate agents, they attributed all the mischiefs and misfortunes of mankind.

as soon as the little physiognomies peeped through the entangling weeds, a metaphysical reaction took such an effect upon the invaders of the sanctuary, that they disappeared with the velocity of a ten-horse percussion impetus, throwing their bill-hooks behind them to mutilate or destroy the legion of demons they imagined in pursuit of them. Devilry and destruction at the same moment were too much for the vulnerable susceptibility of black skins, and the completion of the work, by necessity devolved upon the invincible prowess of the white overseers; no negro daring to venture within sight of it. The negroes gave it the name of the "*Jumbe*-rock," and at the present day some of them have marvellous misgivings in passing it after sunset, generally pausing to receive self-absolution, before they make the attempt. The superficies of the rock indicates the influence of friction caused by contact with other bodies which have been impelled by the impetuosity of the mountain waters in their course towards the sea, before the distributive hand of Providence had assigned other channels for their escape.

The Valley of Layou, although surpassed in beauty by several other spots in the island, de-

signed as it were by nature for seclusion and repose: claims for itself features of no ordinary stamp. It rises gradually from a small deep bay which is skirted by a white sandy beach and planted with rows of tall cocos. From this point, the valley takes a lateral course to the interior mountains, its sides presenting irregular and undulating forms, which gradually converge and become connected at the distance of about two miles from the sea, where the valley terminates—leaving no other outlet than a few intricate paths through abrupt and precipitous defiles. The whole valley comprises two estates, ostensibly belonging at the time to one family with distinct interests: we say ostensibly, because, like most West Indian estates, they were in the hands of mortgagees: and a small pure stream which rises in the mountains runs between them, affording in its descent towards the sea, the means of working their respective mills. The cane-lands, owing to the irregular character of the upland sides, present singular forms, in beautiful contrast with the bold and densely wooded mountains which overhang them, and defining more unequivocally, by their precipitous and uncultivated summits, the boundaries of this retired spot.

The proprietor's house on Rutland Vale, the largest estate, stands at the head of the valley, and corresponds in appearance and magnitude with the extent and importance of the possession; but it presented a mournful picture of mutability in the affairs of man, irresistibly forcing upon the mind of the visitor associations connected with those days of prosperity and independence, in which West Indian proprietors are known to have lived, and the painful conviction that poverty and ruin have overtaken them in their career. Rank grass was growing around its walls and in their vicinity, covering the paths, and shooting up between the marble steps that lead to the hall—the extensive domestic offices, ranged under an arched passage on the ground-floor, an unusual feature in West Indian buildings, had become the haunts of wood-slaves, and other reptiles, that covet the elysian charms of mildew, and rust, and damp noisome air [1]. In the hall were a few articles of old fashioned furniture, barely serving to break

[1] We shudder at the idea of a wood-slave, as much as we do lest some of our readers should imagine we mean a negro, and accuse us of associating him with reptiles. Three years ago, the above passage, without explanation, might have caused the members of the Anti-Slavery Society in convocation to have jumped from

the vacant uniformity of its area; the cloth of the billiard-table, which stood in the centre, was thread-bare and torn, and a few pictures mouldering on the walls, among which were the portraits of the late proprietor and his lady, whose amiable guise, under the hand of the painter, peered through the dust and cobwebs which defaced them, apt emblem

their seats, and ourselves to be branded with the name of miscreant, by their host of itinerant spouters, employed to

> ——" torture truth ten thousand ways,
> To spin detraction forth from themes of praise,
> To make *vice* sit for purposes of strife,
> And draw the hag much larger than the life;
> To make the good seem bad—the bad seem worse,
> And represent man's nature as a curse."

No, the wood-slave, of which direful stories have been told, is the lacerta *gecko*, or Indian salamander of Bontius. The poison of this animal, which it leaves behind it in passing over any thing, exhales from the lobuli of the toes. Hasselquist states that at Cairo, he saw three women at the point of death from eating cheese over which one of these creatures had passed. If the poison falls on the skin it immediately produces small red pustules, causing inflammation and pain. They are shaped somewhat like a lizard, having black slimy skins, and from their hideous appearance, the Caribs gave them the name of *maboujats*, (devils). They are sometimes seen in Cloacina's temple, where we once encountered one, which caused us to depart with as much speed, as was consistent with proper respect to the goddess—who, by the bye, is in the habit of persecuting her votaries in these islands, by keeping pet scorpions, spiders, and red ants to attack them, as a just retribution for the shameful neglect which is too commonly shown to her requisitions.

of time, which has cast the originals in obscurity, served to mark its devastating power, the co-existent influence of decay, and—that the estate was in Chancery!

A *merchant* in Kingston had been appointed receiver, who visited the estate occasionally; the manager under him, necessarily resided near the works at the bay, and the human voice seldom sounded within the walls of the "great house," or awakened echo from her profound repose in the mountains which overhung it. The picture we have faintly sketched, might be supposed popular in all the West Indian islands from the frequency of its appearance. The madness of appointing merchants receivers and conductors of estates, is so self-evident, that a commission *de lunatico inquirendo* ought to issue against any and every person who has been, is, or may be implicated in causing the Court of Chancery to tolerate such an absurdity. We cannot indeed refrain from expressing surprise that the Court, which in all cases is supposed to exercise cautious regard to the qualifications of receivers, should in instances out of number that we could name, have fallen into the error. The only explanation that can be given is this:

a merchant mortgagee in England is frequently interested in the suit—a merchant in the West Indies is his most *suit*able correspondent. He attends at the Master's office, with the other parties in the cause, by their several solicitors, the West Indian merchant is proposed by name, without being disputed, or known to be ineligible, the Master's report is made to the Court, and the appointment follows. In the first place, an attorney or conductor of a sugar estate, cannot do justice to the undertaking unless he resides on it or near it, and can visit it frequently. Secondly, the avocations of a merchant, however qualified he may be in other respects, necessarily absorb more of his attention than is consistent with such a pursuit. Thirdly, however honest he may be, he at least becomes an interested person in providing supplies for the property at his own prices; and we hesitate not a moment to affirm, that such instances of gross and continued malversation, have come to our knowledge, in Tortola especially; so shamefully have estates been conducted under such management, that we verily believe, as regards many of them, their ruin is to be solely attributed to these causes; and here, as in Tortola, the merchant was also master and

examiner in Chancery, and *the auditor of his own accounts.* Many estates are at this moment so circumstanced.

In a corresponding position with the Rutland-Vale House, on the opposite side of the stream and a deep valley, which divide the two estates, is the cottage of "Palmiste Park." Here we were domiciled for a few days with its hospitable proprietor, who has since closed his account with the world. It is really one of the prettiest spots that can well be imagined. The house stands on a made terrace, on the top of a steep hill that juts out from the chain of high mountains in the back-ground, and to which access is gained by a flight of steps. A large copaifera[1] spreads its ample branches over the roof, a pretty flower-garden stands on one side, and the whole valley of Layou lies at your feet; but the spot that charmed us the most was "the bath;" our ideas at this moment luxuriate in delicious reminiscence, and carry us down a winding path on the hill-side, amidst aromatic shrubs, and flowers, and tall trees, to the bottom of a deep glen, where —sweet enchanting creature, so beautiful and so

[1] The tree that produces the moran or balsam capivi.

pure, with heaven reflected in thy face, and zephyrs sporting on thy bosom, gliding onward in spotless innocence through hidden rocks and entangling brakes, graceful in thy *falls*, and musical in thy *complaints*—Oh! take us to thy soft encircling arms, we woo thee, we—well thou art no prude, so in two minutes we were over head and ears in—water. The affections must be exercised on something, for not to love is to be miserable; "Were I in a desert," says Sterne, "I would find out wherewith in it to call them forth. If I could not do better, I would fasten them upon some sweet myrtle, or seek some melancholy cypress to connect myself to. I would court their shade and greet them kindly for their protection; I would cut my name upon them, and swear they were the loveliest trees throughout the desert. If their leaves withered, I would teach myself to mourn, and when they rejoiced I would rejoice with them." We afterwards saw *our* charmer working at a sugar-mill; but she could not reproach us; we had been divorced by mutual consent. As her ripening beauties expanded to the public gaze, she became restless and fretful, and impatient of restraint—one moment breaking into cataracts of clamour, the

next sullen and moody; but still we loved her, as we saw her passing onward to the great ocean of eternity, and dearly do we cherish her remembrance in the picture she gave us at parting.

Lympha salubris amœna, perenni defluе rivo,
Saxifrago lapsu defluе, dulcis aqua.
Defluе per flores lapidesque, levique susurro
Mobilis in gremio se lavet aura tuo.
Nonne fugax cursu simili tibi volvitur annus,
Et vita effluvio præterit ipsa pari?
Sed se lata dies et fons sine morte replevit,
Heu! brevis est homini cursus—et hora perit!

We found these lines engraven on the spot by some congenial soul, who, like ourselves, had passed his brief hour in fancy's fairy regions, and

passed on; and where is he now?—Echo answers "where?".

The bath is formed by a wall across the stream, and the bottom of it is beautifully levelled with fine sand; but the surrounding scenery—the overhanging mountains, the luxuriant spreading foliage, the odorous shrubs and flowers, the musical murmurs of the waters, and a neat little Indian hut at the edge of the stream, are the ingredients of its loveliness.

The negroes were not so well clothed, as those in most of the islands, we speak of them generally in St. Vincent, the means of communication and intercourse being less open from the character of the country, and the consequent repression of their imitative propensities, may have partly occasioned it, but they appeared every where no less cheerful and happy; excepting now and then we met with a sullen suspicious looking rogue of an African. There was, and is, a larger portion of these people in the island than in any other colonies we had visited. Our host at Palmiste Park, was a truly benevolent hearted man; and his care of his negroes rather approached to imprudent indulgence. Fond of fun himself, aye, to his very heart's core, his greatest delight was to see his negroes in a state of

frantic happiness, and he could boast of more musicians in his little community, than, perhaps, any proprietor in the smaller Antilles. The fiddle, the *banjar*, the jew's harp, the drum, the triangle, the iron-pot, and the papered comb, were all tortured into discordant *harmony* in turn, and sometimes in concert, with a million of lizards, and crickets, and snakes, in the happiest emulation, to give one an idea of music in purgatory; and a dozen little black chubby logs of moving ebony, at the risk of their necks, invariably clambered up the steps that led to the terrace in front of the cottage, the moment they heard the flute of their master playing, and there began their movements like so many tadpoles at the bottom of a basin. Certainly, in no part of the world have we ever met with children more carefully nurtured and more impudently vivacious, than are the negro youngsters in our West India islands, from the infant "mewling and puking in the nurse's arms," to the sturdy aspirant for a hut and provision grounds. The greatest mortality among them, has been occasioned by the abominable practice of mothers stuffing them to repletion, occasioning convulsions and lock-jaw, but they have at length yielded to experience and more

salutary regulations. In the meanwhile, the population has received little assistance from the birth of twins; we met with few instances. Formerly, such a circumstance would have endangered the life of the mother, at the hands of her infuriated husband, who could not be persuaded to account for such a phenomenon, in any other way than by attributing it to the officious interposition of a second father. In Antigua, we found children at the breast at eighteen and twenty months old, which really caused us to take upon ourselves the office of *dry* nurse, and by degrees to establish a regulation that they should be weaned at fifteen months. This regulation is most common in the islands; and the practice of having all the weaned children brought to the "great house" at a certain hour, to share in a mess of spoon-meat provided for them, we found very general on the estates we visited.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE SOUFFRIERE—ERUPTION OF 1812—MORNE RONDE—THE CARIBS — BOTANICAL GARDEN — CALLIAQUA — MARIAQUA VALLEY—BEN SOCO.

"——— I have seen
Hours dreadful and things strange; but this sore night
Hath trifled former knowings."—*Macbeth.*

In the north-western quarter of the island, the mountains attain the greatest elevation, and are thrown into bolder and connected masses. Here the "great *lion*" of the colony, the Souffrière mountain, rears its frowning and majestic head high above the neighbouring summits; its enormous flanks crouching amidst the wild desolation it hath made, and the impenetrable solitudes which surround it. Its height has been computed at about 3000 feet; but its altitude is materially reduced in effect, by the continuous range of subjacent mountains in one direction, and, on the other, by the gradual declination of its sides towards the sea, where it terminates in steep, broken precipices.

Until 1812, nearly a century had elapsed without any indication of volcanic action, and the interior of the crater seemed to promise, through future ages, uninterrupted repose to slumbering solitude. It presented a scene of Alpine seclusion and tranquillity the most beautiful that can be imagined: various evergreens and aromatic shrubs covered in exuberant fertility the sides of the capacious circus; and from its centre rose a conical hill of about 300 feet in height, richly skirted at the base by luxuriant vegetation, with pure virgin sulphur crowning its summit. On the north and south sides of the cone were two pieces of water, one perfectly pure and tasteless, the other strongly impregnated with sulphur and alum. The surpassing beauty and grandeur of the spot, well repaid the labour and fatigue occasioned in gaining access to it, and they were rendered more exchanting by the singular melody of a bird, an inhabitant of those upper solitudes, and altogether unknown in other parts of the island; the mournful notes of the *ramier*, and the light twitterings of smaller birds; but, as if impatient of the occasional intrusion of man, and the ready answers of echo in revealing her secrets, nature was roused from her slumbers, broke through

all restraint, and with savage ferocity, spread desolation and ruin in every direction. On the 27th of April, 1812, the awful visitation which followed, was announced by a tremendous crash that shook the island to its extremities, and thick columns of black curling smoke continued to issue during two succeeding days, from the deep recesses of the Souffrière, and to gather in portentous gloom over its trusculent features.

On Thursday the 30th, the reflection of the rising sun on this majestic body of curling vapour was sublime beyond imagination; it afterwards assumed a more sulphureous cast, and in the course of the day, a ferruginous and sanguine appearance, with much livelier action in the ascent, a more extensive dilatation, as if almost freed from every obstruction; in the afternoon the noise became incessant, and resembled the approach of thunder still nearer and nearer, with a vibration that affected the feelings and hearing. Terror and consternation now seized all beholders. The Caribs at Morne Ronde fled precipitately towards the town; the negroes became confused, forsook their work, looked to the mountain, and as it shook, trembled with dread of what they could neither understand nor describe: the birds fell to the ground overpowered with showers of farilla, unable to keep themselves on the wing: the cattle were starving from want of food, as not a blade of grass or a leaf was now to be found: the sea became discoloured, but in no wise uncommonly agitated, and throughout the whole of this violent disturbance of the earth, it continued passive, and did not at any time sympathize with the agitation of the land. Scarcely had the day closed, when the flames burst pyramidically from the crater through the mass of smoke: the rolling of the thunder became more awful and deafening; electric flashes quickly succeeded, attended with loud claps; and now indeed the hurly-burly

began. Shortly after seven P. M. the mighty cauldron was seen to simmer, and the ebullition of lava to break out on the N. W. side: this, immediately after boiling over the orifice, and flowing a short way, was opposed by the acclivity of a higher point of land, over which it was impelled by the immense tide of liquefied fire that drove it on, forming the figure V in grand illumination. Sometimes, when the ebullition slackened, or was insufficient to urge it over the obstructing hill, it recoiled back like a refluent billow from the rock, and then again rushed forward, impelled by fresh supplies and scaling every obstacle; carrying rocks and woods together in its course down the slope of the mountain, until it precipitated itself down some vast ravine, concealed by the intervening ridges of Morne Ronde. Vast globular bodies of fire were at the same time seen projected from the fiery furnace, and bursting, fell back into it, or over it, on the surrounding trees and bushes, which were instantly set in flames. About four hours after the lava boiled over the crater, it reached the sea, as was observed by the reflection of the fire and the electric flashes attending it; and an hour after midnight, another stream of lava was seen descending in the opposite direction to the eastward. The thundering noise of the mountain, and the vibration of sound, that had been so formidable hitherto, now mingled in the sullen monotonous roar of the rolling lava, and became so terrible, that dismay was almost turned to despair. At this time the first earthquake was felt, as if producing the awful catastrophe which excited apprehension had anticipated; and this was followed for two hours by showers of cinders, that fell with the hissing noise of millions of snakes writhing in agonies of protracted dissolution. A dreadful rain of stones and fire followed for the space of another hour, and was again succeeded by cinders from three o'clock till six o'clock in the morning. Earthquake followed earthquake almost momentarily, the whole of this part of the island being in a continual state of oscillation: not agitated by shocks, vertical or horizontal, but undulated like water shaken in a bowl. The break of day, if such it could be called, was truly awful. At eight o'clock, darkness was only visible, and the birth of the first of May, dawned like the day of judgment: a chaotic gloom enveloped the mountains, and an impenetrable haze hung over the

sea with black sluggish clouds of a sulphureous cast. The whole island was covered with farilla, cinders, scoria, and broken masses of volcanic matter. It was not until the afternoon, that the muttering noise of the mountain sunk gradually into a solemn yet suspicious silence. The beds of the Wallibou and Rabacca rivers were completely levelled, and other deep channels were formed. The damage done to estates was far more inconsiderable than was apprehended, and not more than fifty souls perished [1].

This explosion changed the whole appearance of the mountain, and a new crater was formed on the N. E. of the former one, from which it is separated by a narrow ridge. The conical hill was destroyed, and an immense lake of boiling water supplied its place. During the convulsion, the loud and repeated roaring was heard, not only a considerable distance at sea, but at a Portuguese fortress in the wilds of Guiana, where the soldiers were under arms the whole of the night from apprehension of a noise they could not clearly comprehend, but which indicated the firing of cannon at no great distance; and the volcanic ashes were thrown to so great a distance, that a vessel to windward of Barbadoes at the time, had her decks and rigging completely covered with them [2].

[1] A more detailed account of this sublime scene, is to be found in the Evening Mail, 30th June, 1812, and in Southey's Chronology, Vol. III. 512.

[2] This circumstance has been frequently alluded to, by way of

Morne Ronde, alluded to in the foregoing particulars, marks the boundary of the Carib settlement, and terminates all practicable communication along the leeward coast of the island. We visited this wild and retired spot in a canoe, after tracing some of the ravages occasioned by the convulsion we have spoken of, in the neighbourhood of Wallibou, where a fine estate, which bears the name, now smiles again in verdant vegetation, like the Phœnix from the ashes which, for a time, destroyed every feature of its former existence. We landed in a small cove with a sandy beech hemmed in by steep overhanging rocks, from whose summits, nature's rude missiles might have checked the ardour of the most determined assailants, and a

proving the extraordinary impetus given to such bodies by the violence of the eruption. Barbadoes is ninety miles from coast to coast, immediately to windward of St. Vincent. It is quite clear, that the volcanic matter being thrown upward to a considerable height, was conveyed thence by a counter current of wind. The former eruption took place about 1718. On that occasion, a sloop proceeding from Saint Christopher's to Barbadoes, was in like manner suddenly covered with ashes two or three inches deep on the deck, and the terrific noise heard by the passengers on board of her, caused them to seek safety by returning, utterly unable to account for a phenomenon, which seemed to indicate greater danger in pursuing their course.

narrow intricate winding led us to the simple habitations of the Caribs, scattered without order or arrangement in the ascending defiles. A few naked children, and a fine well proportioned youth, who stared at us with inquiring intelligence, were the only persons that immediately appeared—the huts were mostly deserted, and contained the most simple articles of domestic use, a table, a swinging hammock, with no bedding, and a few calabashes to contain water; from which Will Shakspeare might have caught the idea, that

> "Our basest beggars
> Are in the poorest thing superfluous:
> Allow not nature more than nature needs,
> Man's life is cheap as beast's."

A quantity of Indian corn was suspended to dry[1].

"How d'ye do, *Mary*," said one of our party to a female who now issued from one of the habitations, with an infant in her arms. Mary gave a smiling response, with an English accent that bespoke a tolerable acquaintance with the language,

[1] The hammock was found in common use among the inhabitants of these islands, when Columbus first discovered them; whence, with the name, *hamack*, they became generally used by Europeans on board a ship.

A Carib, of Morne Ronde.

Saint Vincent

but her features were more of the African character, than of the aboriginal Indians, who were remarkable for the symmetry of their forms, and long straight glossy hair. Her proportions too, were singularly *out* of proportion, as if—excepting her head and feet, she had been formed of the half limbs of a muscular giantess, but she was good-tempered, her look was a welcome as she asked us to her hut; she brought us fruit, and water from the spring, with the eagerness of a generous spirit, and fain would have proffered Nature's amplest gifts in honour of our presence. And what can we do for thee Mary, in requital for thy kindness? We will add thy portraiture to the painted beauties of these sunny isles, and purchase one of thy baskets [1]. Her husband, and most of the adult inmates of the other habitations were absent, cultivating their grounds, or fishing, but several appeared before we quitted the place. The men were certainly more

[1] The Caribs manufacture very beautiful baskets and take them to Kingstown for sale, they are coveted by the ladies, and are frequently brought to England as presents. The upper and lower parts correspond in shape and character, forming of themselves distinct open baskets, the former being much larger so as to fold over the bottom, affording a water-proof envelope to the contents.

prepossessing than the women, without disparagement of the amiable Mary, and those of her sex,

> Whose occupation, being shy,
> Or any other reason why,

kept from our inquisitive gaze. The men manifested neither surprise nor suspicion at our presence, but rather the listless independence of a resigned and broken spirit, doomed to breathe through the cheerless void of an useless life. They folded their arms and stood at ease, as they spoke to us, in the erect position of undisputed equality—and as we gazed upon, or—from that inexplicable involution of the mind, hunted by imagination through the mazes of an ideal world, with that rapidity which makes things that are palpable to the sight, impalpable to the perception, we rather placed our eyes on vacancy unconscious of their presence, till the *absent* mind returned to give assurance to their functions—and where, good reader, do you suppose it had been? Verily, we did not discover till we returned to England, and then it was at a moment the truant was again absent at Morne Ronde, manufacturing water-proof baskets with the Caribs,

which caused us to detect that it had been over to our no less savage ancestors, the ancient Britons, who, like the Caribs, painted, went naked, and made baskets for exportation [1].

But the Caribs at Morne Ronde had lost most of the primitive customs and propensities of their forefathers. Their huts were, perhaps, not much better built than they were when the Spaniards first appeared among them, certainly infinitely inferior to the worst of the negro's houses on the plantations; they retained the hammock for their bed, gourds for some of their utensils; the men were excellent swimmers and divers, expert fishermen and hunters, and they seemed to retain that invincible spirit, which persecution and cruelty, practised towards them by the Spaniards and French especially, and in some instances by the English, could not overcome. What a milder regimen might have effected, is a question we will not agitate: but we did not find the flat nose and com-

[1] Juvenal mentions these baskets among the *extravagant* furniture of the Romans in his time—and Martial alludes to them thus:—

Barbara de pictis veni bascauda Britannis,
Sed me jam mavult, dicere Roma suam.

pressed forehead [1], they were not in *puris naturalibus*, except the children, and we believe the custom of the men "lying-in" for their wives, was totally exploded [2].

The natural beauties of this island, certainly exceed in variety and grandeur, any that came under our observation in the other colonies. Saint Christopher's is unquestionably a charming spot, but her features are more *handsome* than beautiful, more associated with the elaborate labour of art;

[1] It was a custom with these people to flatten with boards the foreheads and noses of their infants, from a singular prejudice that it contributed to the beauty of the face. Long after this custom was growing into disuse, children were born with their features, materially flattened by the mysterious workings of nature in conception.

[2] Among all savage people, nature appears to perform the obstetric functions with singular facility. Even La Belle Yarico, "who would not be woo'd by any means to weare clothes," says Ligon, "walked down to a wood, in which was a pond of water, and there brought herselfe a bed, and in three hours' time, came home with her childe in her armes, a lusty boy, frolick and lively." This important matter being settled among the Caribs, the husband went to bed, where for ten or twelve days he was tenderly nursed and kept on a spare diet, which; for a space of forty days, was gradually increased until he was able to go about; and in the case of a first born, the abstinence was more rigorous. This ridiculous custom was also common among the Japanese and Brazilians, and at one time it was practised in a province in France.

Saint Vincent is a botanical garden in itself, her ferns are the most splendid we ever beheld in any part of the world, of which there are nearly a hundred species, clothing the rugged sides of the mountainous passes, and affording exquisite relief to the larger productions of the vegetable kingdom, the stems of which seem to stand on a richly variegated carpet. Nevertheless, much to the credit of the colony, about a mile and a half from Kingstown, there is a conservatory of native and exotic beauties, occupying thirty-nine and a half acres of ground, and situated in as charming a spot as could well have been chosen. We here found the nutmeg, and a variety of oriental productions, all in vigorous growth, one tall tapering areca *catechu*, a rarity in occidental India, rising as straight as an arrow with its beautiful plume at the summit, amidst the more gorgeous and variegated tints of accumulated dainties [1].

The harbour of Kingstown, although it affords safe and commodious anchorage, is considered less

[1] Mr. Coleridge says, the annona cherimolia is not in the West Indies. We found it in several islands, at Santa Cruz, and Antigua, and at Saint Vincent's there are no less than ten species of the annona, of which two, the pomtata and retonda folia, are, we believe, peculiar to the island.

eligible for shipping of heavy tonnage than the bay of Calliaqua, distant by land about two miles. The valley of Calliaqua rises for two or three miles to a considerable elevation in the interior of the country, containing three distinct sugar plantations. This point should be visited by all admirers of the sublime and beautiful in scenery, who may chance to sojourn in Saint Vincent. In the ascent, the mind is prepared only for a wild and impenetrable country, impervious on all sides beyond the head of the valley, where precipitous mountains, whose summits are lost, or partially obscured by the clouds, appear to form a barrier to any farther ingress. Constantly looking back on the long vista of cane-fields and provision-grounds which cover the upland sides, the different dwellings and sugar-works in the intermediate spaces, the village, and shipping in the bay, with the clear blue ocean, and a number of small islands, dependencies of Saint Vincent, closing the distance, the imagination frames nothing beyond the point of observation to urge one a step further; but emerging from a narrow path skirted by trees and brush-wood, a scene of magnificence and solemn grandeur

suddenly opens upon you, and you stand in amazement, contemplating at your feet a vast valley of circular form, surrounded by stupendous mountains, whose opposite boundaries are nearly lost in distance, or obscured by congregated vapours, which cast an impenetrable gloom over their deepest recesses, and add to the sober dignity which pervades the whole. A narrow ridge, called the Vigie, which may be said to represent a part of the rim of this immense basin, separates the Valley of Mariaqua from that of Caliaqua. Take Rasselas with you, and read it on the spot.

Well, Araminta, thou art outdone: thy "belly da cut me, hed he da bong me, feber da burn me," *white* tongue, treacherous pulse, and all-overness, are all distanced in sagacity, by the one comprehensive complaint of Ben Soco of Saint Vincent. We had our hospital idlers here, as well as at Antigua and Saint Kitt's, till the prescription of *confinement*, wrought a speedy cure, contrary to the usual effect of medicine, by *dis*agreeing with the patient[1]. Ben Soco was an incorrigible scamp, he

[1] The trick of shamming illness by the indolent negroes, in order to go to the hospital to swallow a dose, and afterwards to

had gained the mastery over every body that had entered the lists with him, and he had so effectually established the prescriptive right of working wher and how he pleased, that it became expedient t come to terms, and to instal him in the office h seemed most to covet, that of stable-keeper o groom; whose duties, in Ben's comprehension, wa to ride the horses at his own pleasure, to see tha they curried themselves, and that the saddles, bridles, and bits, kept free from dust and rust by hanging in the stables. To dispute the reasonableness of this, was to infect Ben with every disease in turn, that the vocabulary of medicin recognises, and having gone through as many distempers, swallowed as many cathartics, emetics and boluses, as might have killed a dozen weake mortals, Ben bethought himself of a complaint tha would answer every purpose he desired, judging from those who were on the doctor's list with it, that it was very delightful to keep in an *incumben*

follow their inclinations in idleness is so common, that we suppos there is no person that ever conducted a West Indian estate, wh has not witnessed it—and there are no means so effectual in preventing it as rigidly enforcing the regulation that they remain in the hospital. A negro cannot bear confinement.

Ben Soco,

or Fairhall, St. Vincent.

posture, as long as agreeable, and to have lots of nourishing food, without the trouble of cooking it. Accordingly Ben made himself ill after a recipe of his own, which consisted of a ride to town, an extra portion of new rum, the broken knees of a horse, a lost saddle, and a sorrowful countenance, which effectually gave him the complaint that has acquired the French designation of *mal de mère*, being one that he had not previously tried, and one which had hitherto been considered by the most skilful anatomists, *peculiar* to women. Ben was an African, his countenance at once expressed it, and he was willing to establish the stamp of character, by a perfect contempt of either dress or address; although, on particular occasions, he wore a soldier's jacket, and maintained a singular predilection for a pair of short wide-legged trousers, whose ample folds gave them the appearance of a short petticoat, and with the military garment, bespoke for the wearer the character of Moll Flaggon.

CHAPTER XXXI.

PROPRIETORS AND ATTORNIES.

" Amongst the sons of men, how few are known
Who dare be just to merit not their own;
Superior virtue, and superior sense,
To knaves, and fools, will always give offence."

CHURCHILL.

We have had occasion to allude to the injury which West Indian proprietors have sustained from long and continued absence from their estates. It is the parent stem of the synopsis of evils, which, for a long period, have been undermining their interests; and the sections and subsections, with their distinct and numerous ramifications, are only to be recognised as the offspring of that one root. Had they given their personal interference occasionally—there are some that have done so, but there are more who have neglected it, and many that have never seen their estates,—they might have formed

more correct notions of their capabilities and management, of the characters of their agents, have seen more into the details of their means, have checked, in some instances, improvident and wasteful expenditure, have had less cause to make those pecuniary sacrifices, which have either transferred their power to mortgagees, or wholly wrested their properties from their hands; and certainly they would have had less need to exercise caprice and injustice towards many of their agents, who have been too honest and independent, to be secure from the shafts of envy, and whom they have willingly sacrificed to the covert poison of a malevolent spirit in the colony. Next to decided mismanagement, we know of nothing so injurious to a sugar plantation as frequent change of management, *i. e.* a frequent change of the persons appointed to conduct it. In a design so comprehensive, not merely as regards the cultivation and the several departments of labour, but more particularly the establishment and maintenance of a salutary system of moral government among several hundreds of an ignorant and semi-barbarous people: it is evident that active intelligence, combined with an honest and

independent zeal, are required to do justice to the undertaking; and whether he be the proprietor himself, or the attorney or agent acting for him, the person so employed may be compared to the impelling power of a complex machine, to remove which, is not only to suspend the action of the whole body, but to disorganize the subordinate details, even after it has been replaced. We have sufficiently described the character of the negroes to make it clear, we think, that considerable tact is required in controlling them; that a patient study of the habits and peculiar disposition of them individually as well as collectively, is essential to the maintenance of a beneficent subordination. In the cultivation of the estate, much judgment, caution, and foresight are necessary in *theory*, and great regularity and promptness in *execution*. The first emanate from one individual, the second depend upon the agency of the multitude. The one is governed by the voice of reason tempered by experience; the number by impulse, begetting restlessness and perverseness, their ideas, feelings, and energies resting on the pivot of the moment, upon which they may be turned to any point in the com-

pass by the attraction of novelty. It is, therefore, deducible from reason, that a frequent removal and change of the governing power must essentially disturb the whole system, and nothing short of cruelty or ill-treatment of the negroes is more calculated to produce it. However well treated and happy they may be, or the reverse, work must be suspended or neglected, if it be only to express their sorrow, or to rejoice among themselves at the departure of their old Massa, and their gladness, as matter of course, in welcoming the new one, whom it is their next object to "*try*." And try him they do, in every way their sagacity suggests to them. Experiments worked out, during the time of his predecessor, are enacted over again; the hospital is filled with patients, with all Ben Soco's, and Araminta's disorders in rotation; he is assailed by them, one after the other, with "Massa, aw cum hausk you lilly fabor," and their little favours all hinge upon the experiment of trying his temper and disposition. The overseers come in for their share of the ordeal, and in their complaints tacitly rebuke him, as the cause of the disorder, and mistake his caution and temporizing, the only

salutary means combined with *tact* and firmness, for ill advised lenity. This is no individual picture: we will put it before every proprietor that ever visited his estate, and every attorney that ever undertook the control of one. And yet have we known instances innumerable of the most perfect recklessness of such consequences, and indifference to those principles of justice which every honourable mind ought to regard, by absent proprietors removing their agents at a moment's notice, without assigning a reason, solely from placing too implicit belief in the misrepresentations and falsehoods of their secret and designing enemies.

Men are to be found, too numerous in every society, who "envy an unblemished reputation, and what they envy they are busy to destroy; they are unwilling to suppose themselves meaner and more corrupt than others, and therefore willingly pull down from their elevation those with whom they cannot rise to an equality;" stimulated, however, by the prospects of gain, the passion works with tenfold malignity and proportionate caution, and in our West Indian communities it has an

ample field for its operations. Planters and merchants form the great body of society, but although associated by their mutual necessities, the former occupy the largest sphere of action, and present more numerous grades of distinction. Of these, resident proprietors form the smallest number. Attornies, or the agents of absentees, of whom some are the resident proprietors, bear the next ascending proportion. Managers, who act under the attornies, in the more practical duties of the estate; and overseers who act under the managers. The duties of the attorney, if conscientiously and properly discharged, are extremely arduous, as must be manifest from what we have stated, and perhaps, in many instances, he would be badly remunerated for his services, by the most ordinary mode of payment, namely, a commission on each cask of sugar of a certain weight, if his attention was restricted to one estate only, and that perhaps, in a bad state of cultivation, and requiring all his skill and energy to make it productive. Hence it has been customary for persons to hold agencies for several proprietors, to an extent that has made it utterly impossible for them to do justice

to any one. We know of an instance, in a very mountainous island, where communication with a distant quarter is necessarily irksome and attendant with delay, of one individual, himself a proprietor, having the control of no less than twenty-one estates in different districts. It is clear, that he could not give one whole day's attention to each of these properties in succession, if his own estate shared alike in the division of his duties without nearly four weeks intervening; in the mean time the interests of his several employers were left in the hands of irresponsible agents, whose removal at any time would produce the same ill consequences as in the case of the attorney, and the negroes, ever ready to find excuse for absence, would seek him at his own residence to justify misconduct. Competition to obtain attorneyships has consequently been induced, managers so situated have naturally aspired to the office, and no means have been left untried to effect this purpose. Their more immediate contact with captains of vessels, the merchants, and missionaries—yes, even the missionaries, have in instances that have come under our immediate observation, lent themselves to favour their designs; have promoted

their pretensions, by direct and anonymous communications with the proprietors in England: and while in many instances such representations have led to a favourable change for the interest of *some* proprietors, as in such a case as the one just cited, in too many the same system of espionage has militated against every principle of justice and humanity by causing others to dismiss from their employ, without cause or motive being assigned, many intelligent, honourable-minded men, whose best energies, and a never-ceasing anxiety to promote their interests, have called for every demonstration of gratitude and esteem [1]. Many persons, so treated, some perhaps, who have given up other pursuits, quitted a different channel of certain preferment, incurred expense in establishing themselves in a distant colony, and who have been limited to the control of one individual's interests, after incessantly and successfully toiling to promote those interests, have seen the well-earned benefits

[1] More serious consequences to the proprietor, than those we have mentioned, have, in most instances followed. The successful agent has naturally calculated upon his own insecurity, from the corrupt means by which he gained his preferment being practised against himself; and he has acted accordingly!

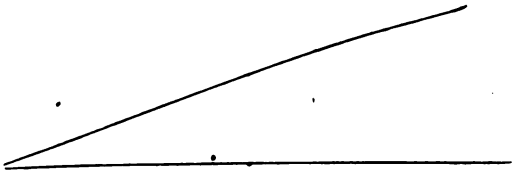
that were to follow, bestowed upon those who had succeeded, by the most corrupt means, in supplanting them, and themselves stamped with unmerited reproach and infamy, and excluded from a sphere of action in which their abilities might have been honourably and profitably exercised.

In Antigua, to such an extent were these practices carried, that we were credibly informed there was a secret combination among a select party, whose most determined efforts were to be directed against all new comers. Whether this were really the case, we are no less assured of several atrocious instances of the consequences we have alluded to, known to arise wholly from base and unfounded representations made to proprietors in England, who, in many instances, imagined they had made a happy discovery.

Valeat quantum valere potest.

We can well then imagine many a West Indian proprietor cogitating over his past life, (like old Croaker poring over his book of bad debts,) or such a document as the following, found among his papers after his decease:—

A West Indian Proprietor in open account with Experience.

DR.	*CR.*
To being absent from my estates, and never thinking it worth while to visit them.	By an income of £10,000 a year, from my property in the West Indies.
To discharging my late attorney, and appointing one who studies his own interest before mine.	By an *ad libitum* life in England, Continental travelling, &c. preferable to breathing under a hot sun, or risking my life in an occasional visit to the tropics.
To additional duties imposed upon West Indian sugars, owing to the supposed wealth of West Indian Proprietors.	By an excellent attorney, who increases my crops.
To the discharge of my attorney, who has nearly ruined my estates by forced labour.	By the satisfaction of *discovering* that my attorney keeps up his remittances by forcing my estates, whence my negroes and stock have alarmingly decreased.
To a reduction in the price of sugar, and a loan from my merchant.	By the appointment of a truly honest man to act as my attorney, who will restore my estates and income.
To the discharge of my excellent attorney through receiving anonymous letters, and representations to his prejudice.	By the expectation that sugars will again "look up."
To several sums raised on mortgage from Mr. Del Credere. my merchant, and to interest at 6 per cent.	
To serious depreciation of West Indian property, through fanatical and *system*-atical *speculations*.	
To the foreclosure of my merchant, and sale of my property, which he bought in for less than my debt.	
To a state of beggary with a wife and children to support.	
To balance carried down . . . . ———	By Balance brought down 0

Memorandum in the handwriting of the deceased.

Applied to Mr. Del Credere, for the management of my lost estates, which he refused.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A LIBERAL VIATICUM—HINTS TO HOMEWARD-BOUND PASSENGERS —A PRACTICAL PUN—SAINT LUCIA—THE PITONS—CASTRIES — THE PAVILION — MARTINIQUE — DIAMOND ROCK — SAINT PIERRE—DOMINICA—GUADALOUPE.

" ——— Tend me awhile;
May be, it is the period of your duty:
Haply, you shall not see me more."

Antony and Cleopatra.

We embarked with the hero of Curaçoa, in his topsail schooner for *Saint Lucia*, but suspicion was sceptical whether the admiral did not meditate a roving commission; and, with the foresight of a man who was familiar with banyan days and two-thirds allowance, had calculated all the chances of being kept longer at sea than might be accordant with the quotidian cravings of the stomach. Such a prodigious quantity of edibles and potables that was put on board for a voyage of twelve hours, certainly indicated a covert design that was based upon his determination to " cut and run" from his

government, and to leave the council and assembly to legislate without a *head.* Ligon's bill of fare might stand for a recital of the items, excepting the *beef,* and cold guinea fowls, a standing dish of the admiral's, and champagne, served as a tolerable succedaneum. The guinea fowl is, *par comparaison,* the pheasant of the West Indies, and, in perfection, is undoubtedly equal to it in flavour. It should be shot through the head with a *ram-rod,* and put on the spit panting; so we were told by a connoisseur in such matters. *A-propos,* however, of "laying in stock." Sensitive reader! if thou hast never embarked in an *homeward*-bound West Indiaman, with thy animal machine in full possession of all its faculties, and a fair portion of tropical bile within thee, thou hast no correct idea of a share of infelicity, that might well damp the ardour of the most determined voyager. Tar, pitch, turpentine, and bilge-water, are delectable perfumes, compared with the compound effluvia of the vegetable exhalations that assail thy olfactories, or all-refractories, according to our friend Captain Dove, emitted in steam from the new sugar—perchance too, half a dozen puncheons of rum as cabin passengers, and

the companion-ladder removed to accommodate an extra hogshead of sugar, with a few cleats nailed to the bilge of it, to afford thee footing in thy descent to the cabin[1]. But custom may tutor thy sense of smelling for a week or so, till the sea breezes have aired the vessel, and the molasses have escaped through the pumps, and with Ovid's "*nescio qua natale solum*," &c. running in thy head, thou mayest accommodate thyself to thy society; but why—we have cogitated over the question, and consulted the best authorities, the captains themselves, without arriving at any other deduction, than that *custom* had settled the matter beyond all dispute—should'st thou pay as much, generally more, for thy passage homeward, as for thy passage outward? and be thy own purveyor to thy animal necessities, which inflicts upon thee the task of providing all the notions that are comprehended in a housekeeper's diary. Is the passage more protracted? upon an average, a few days only. Are provisions dearer than in England? Certainly not. Is your accommodation better? undoubtedly

[1] Our hints on embarking from England equally apply in selecting a ship for thy return—avoid a chance trader.

the reverse. Are you more plethoric in pocket? the question has no bearing. Is the captain equally able to make the provision? yes. Is a guinea a day, that is a fair average, sufficient remuneration? admitted in the outward charge. Then, why in the name of common honesty, is such a manifest imposition practised? Where is the remedy? We are prepared with it—put thyself on board a mail-boat for Saint Thomas's, you will there provide a passage to New York or Philadelphia, for about twenty dollars, start with a flowing sheet across the trades, perhaps get upset off Cape Hatteras, as we were, but that does not always happen, and in twelve or fourteen days, you will be walking off the deck into a hackney coach, and eating beef and mutton with the Yankees. By this plan you give the cut direct to the abominations we have spoken of, you hear Jonathan *talk*, see him play at billiards, go through his diurnal course of drams, each of which has its particular designation, from the "fog-disperser," and "gum-tickler," in the morning, to "the refresher" and "*the settler*" in the evening, and having seen and heard sufficient to warrant your publishing an account of the man-

ners and customs of the Americans, you may embark in one of the finest ships that ever spread canvass to the winds, enjoy a liberal diet and good accommodation, and arrive at Liverpool or London, in little more time and at about the same expense, we speak of the passage from the West Indies, than are commonly incurred in the direct route[1].

The admiral's sea stock caused us to make this digression, but we are now again under the lee of Saint Vincent. Our friend at Palmiste Park loved a pun dearly, so we gave him three *chairs* (cheers) in silence, as he came on board from Layou Bay. The next morning we were under the *Pitons* of Saint Lucia, two immense pyramidal rocks, which stand by themselves on the edge of the shores, like two giants, or Gog and Magog, who had walked down from the mountains to take a bath; and so tenacious are they of respect in passing them, that if you have not your haliards and sheets in hand, your vessel may be on her beam-ends, before you can

[1] Our passage from Saint Thomas's to New York was twenty-one days, twice the ordinary time; that from New York to England, twenty-two days, unusually quick, making no more than the average passage from the West Indies direct.

call Jack Robinson to assist you, the sudden gusts, or invisible squalls, which are apt to come down upon you, affording you no time for preparation. Three English sailors,—sailors love such exploits,—because the steepest rock was deemed inaccessible, determined to gain the summit; two of them were never seen afterwards, but the third reached the apex, planted the British union on it, and "fell in mortal convulsions by its side;" so says the legend. Snakes, which are numerous and venomous in this island, are supposed to have caused their death.

Certainly, nothing can be more enchanting to those who enjoy the sort of thing, than sailing under the lee of this beautiful chain of islands: the calorific power of the solar rays is reduced to a genial warmth at sea, and the purity and softness of the breezes, which come from the shores like fragrant breathings from the majestic forms which repose in solemn grandeur on its glassy bosom; their congruous and harmonious outlines, the mingled beauty and variety of vegetation, and the gradations of distance and effect, as each island developes in succession its own peculiar charms, at once inspire admiration and pleasure in the be-

holder. We must confess, however, that insular scenery, and all that relates to the civil and moral government of island communities, cause an interest which is less active in the contemplation of the more complicated machinery of a great union of interests—their state of dependence and comparative insecurity, alone inspires a sympathy in their several relations, and when the varied circumstances of their eventful history have been too recently recorded to be obscured by time, or distorted by fiction, a deeper and more intense feeling is excited, according to the freshness borne by the stamp of authenticity. The interest of inquiry gives place to that of conviction.

Castries, the capital of Saint Lucia, lies at the bottom of a deep irregular formed harbour. Behind it, the central mountains, which run through the island to its extremities, rise majestically in deep sombre shades of forest wood, and the several lateral eminences flanking it right and left, while they afford it additional security, add materially to the aspect of seclusion, which particularly marks its situation. It appeared much depopulated, and the detached position of the buildings, chiefly com-

posed of wood that had been much warped and disfigured by the climate, the grass growing in the streets, and the absence of all signs of active industry, too clearly evinced that some equivocal calamity had driven commerce from its shores. St. Lucia has been an unfortunate island. Settled at a later period than most of these colonies, when capital, and that ardent spirit in favour of colonization, which overcame all obstacles in the neighbouring settlements, had become more diffused; and sharing, to a greater extent than many of them, in those calamities which have marked the career of West Indian adventure; its history presents only a lamentable series of distress, of sanguinary conflicts for its possession, and the consequences of an unsettled and capricious government[1].

[1] The English sent a party to colonize Saint Lucia as early as 1639, but in the following year an English ship off Dominica having, for the purpose of selling them as slaves, attempted to carry off the natives who had gone on board to traffic, their countrymen determined to revenge themselves upon the settlers at Saint Lucia, whom they attacked with such fury that only few escaped to Montserrat. Another attempt to settle it was made in 1664. In 1666, out of 1500 persons who landed, only eighty-nine had survived the effects of disease, famine, and the frequent incursions of the Caribs; the island was therefore abandoned, and it remained disregarded upwards of half a century, when upon

In the mean time, sickness caused by miasma, issuing from the extensive tracts of uncleared land, has continued to add its numbers to the bills of mortality. Property is chiefly in the hands of French settlers, who compose the principal portion of the society. As a military position, Saint Lucia is considered an acquisition to Great Britain, but, notwithstanding its great natural resources, as a British colony, it ranks in the lowest scale among these islands.

Government House, which stands on a hill overlooking the town, is decidedly one of the best houses we found in the Caribbees. No wonder that three or four general officers, within the last few years, should have selected it to die in; and the ascent of the hill to gain possession of it, affords an admirable commentary upon a traverse course through life to

the English again attempting a settlement, the right of possession was disputed by the French and English crowns; and in 1748 it was declared, with Tobago, Saint Vincent, and Dominica, a neutral island, and to belong to the Caribs. In 1762 it was taken by the English, ceded to France in the following year, retaken by the English in 1778, again ceded to France in 1783, surrendered to the English in 1794, again ceded to France in 1802, retaken in 1803, and finally ceded to Great Britain in 1814. For a statistical account of the colony see appendix D.

arrive at *eminence.* Immense labour and good workmanship have been bestowed upon this causeway, but the continued cutting *in* and *out* up the acclivities on a broken-winded horse, the saddle taking the place of the crupper, and your nose brought in contact with the animal's withers, as it staggers forward from apprehension of a fall backward, are sufficient to cause you to renounce *Vandyke* for the rest of your life, notwithstanding you may recover your breath, and admire the splendid scenery upon gaining " the Pavilion." As we expatiated widely over mountains, valleys, and plains, cane-fields and savannahs, bays, creeks and coves, rocks and breakers, ripples, and calms, and the town immediately at our feet, Milton startled us with an idea,

> " ——— nor did his eye not ken
> The empire of *Negus !*"

We were at that moment under the inspiration of a three-quart bowl of it, only the natives will call it sangaree. The fact is, that violent exercise within the tropics converts a man into a sort of self-acting portable dripstone, whose porous nature demands

a constant supply of fluid to make it useful and keep it from cracking under a torrid sun. Who would not rather take medicine to prevent a fever, than to cure one? As we stood on the paved terrace which has been raised on the brow of the hill in front of the Pavilion, we were literally streaming from every pore, with a current of cold air passing over us, that would infallibly have caused us to open an account with the doctor, but for the timely prescription of the governor. That abominable zig-zag; we marvel not that the ladies of the town —and what will not ladies encounter to get to a ball? declined coming to a dance at the garrison, unless the officers would "give them a bed;" and so, with the exception of two or three adventurous damsels, who naturally enough calculated upon such a provision without making the stipulation, the officers' wives, and the ladies of our own party were the only females at the assembly [1].

[1] In a cavern at Saint Lucia, near the sea, there is a large basin of brackish water, from whose rocky bottom rise numerous animal substances, which, at first sight, appear to be beautiful flowers of bright shining colours, resembling the single marigold; on the approach of the hand, or any instrument, they immediately retire, like a snail, out of sight. There appear in the middle of the disk four brown filaments, like spiders' legs, which move

Martinique, the next island to St. Lucia to the northward, is decidedly the finest island in the Caribbean range. It is possessed by the French who first settled it in 1635, but it has shared largely in the destinies of warfare, and like all these islands, it has been the theatre of a series of conflicts no less impolitic than sanguinary, between the French and English nations [1].

A singular rock lies about three quarters of a mile from the southern coast. It is not quite a mile in circumference, and rises in almost perpendicular masses from the sea to the height of about 600 feet. The southern and eastern sides are quite inaccessible, and the western side, where landing is practi-

round a kind of yellow petal, with a brisk spontaneous motion. These legs are adapted to receive the prey on which the animal subsists, consisting probably of the spawn of fish and the small insects which the sea throws over into the basin, the yellow petals immediately closing to secure it. Under this appearance of a flower is a brown stalk, which appears to be the body of the animal. Dr. Pinkard mentions a zoophyte of this description in Barbadoes.

[1] Martinique was taken by the English in 1762, but it was restored to France in the following year. It again surrendered to the English in 1794, and continued in their possession until 1801, when it was ceded to France. The English again became masters of it in 1809, and retained it until 1816.

cable, is extremely dangerous; a slope, with a grove of fig-trees, and an immense grotto, is gained by a cautious proceeding over breakers and rocks, and through small interstices, in danger at every step of losing your footing and breaking your neck over the precipitous declivities.

The Diamond Rock, bearing E. *by* N.

The whimsical expedient of fortifying this rock, and the means by which it was accomplished, are quite characteristic of that love of enterprise, which so eminently distinguishes the British sailor. Commodore Hood projected the measure when commanding on the West Indian station, in 1804. In front of the slope alluded to, which projects towards the sea, a battery was erected for a twenty-four pounder. From this point a covered way was

made to another battery, fronting the north east, where another twenty-four pounder was planted; here all further progress was stopped by the impenetrable and precipitous rocks which overhang the breakers beneath, giving defiance to approach. Between the two batteries, a rope-ladder was fixed by which the garrison could pass to the middle of the rock, where there was another battery named after the Commodore, also with a twenty-four pounder; and from thence the ascent, winding between crags and brush-wood, led to the summit of the rock, where two eighteen pounders were mounted with the British union.

The process by which the guns were conveyed from the Centaur, the Commodore's ship, was very ingenious. The ship was brought close under the rock, and to the top of it one end of a cable was conveyed, which served as a stay upon which smaller ropes acted in conveying the guns by a purchase or impelling power, on board the Centaur. The whole arrangement was completed on the Queen's birth-day, the British union was hoisted for the first time, and a royal salute fired, within sight of the enemy at Martinique, and the rock was put

into commission *pro formâ* as a sloop-of-war, Lieutenant Morris being appointed commander, with a compliment of officers and men. In the following year, however, a very formidable French force from Martinique made a desperate attack upon this almost impregnable position, and owing to the want of ammunition and provisions, the garrison was compelled to surrender [1].

Saint Pierre, the capital of Martinique, surpasses every other town we had seen in these islands. It was altogether a novelty. The substantial stone edifices of four and five stories, built in a superior style of European architecture, the regularity of the streets, the number of shops, well stored with every descripture of merchandise, nicnacs, bijous, and notions of all sorts, where you may lounge and fit on kid gloves, try eau de Cologne, and eat bonbons; the pure streams of water gurgling down the centre of the paved streets, the lamps, the green shaded walks, and the extent of the whole

[1] The details of the conflict, which lasted several days, as given by Captain Morris, are to be found in Southey's Chronology and the Naval Chronicle, in which also is noticed a very remarkable feature in this rock. Its height is stated to be 600 *feet*, and it has an overhanging cave on the east side, about 300 *yards* in height.

affair, give you at one glance a comprehensive notion of its commerce, its industry, and its opulence, and declare the people to be *settlers*.

The island is very mountainous, but cultivated in every part that is practicable. Almost every description of the most common European vegetables was in great abundance.

We found Sir William Young's handful of paper, lying betwixt the two French islands of Martinique and Guadaloupe. Certainly, Dominica is rugged and fantastic in its forms; mountains upon mountains, and pinnacles above pinnacles, whose cultivated bases and wooded summits, mingle their verdant and variegated colouring in confused masses with the distant depths of forest wilds, and with the light fleecy vapours they attract; steep and abrupt chasms or gullies intersect, at intervals, the acclivities from the sea; and a bold precipitous and indented shore, adds to the wild confusion of forms which the whole island presents; but there is a delectable richness and variety in the colouring, a congruence in the component parts, and a sublimity in the combination, of which no idea could be formed from the baronet's model.

And yet this fine island seems languishing under the ill-fated destinies of Providence, and the evils of misgovernment. Roseau, the capital, wears nearly the same forlorn and gloomy countenance with which Castries receives its visitors; but you may trace in it some of the outlines of opulence which an active and intelligent spirit had once imparted to it. Invasion, fire, hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, and sickness, have in turn smote it so severely, that it now appears lost in the calm resignation of abjectedness.

How different is the aspect of every thing in Martinique and in Guadaloupe! The latter island lies between Dominica and Antigua. It was also settled by the French in 1635, and, as well as Martinique, has several times surrendered to the British flag. Basseterre, the capital, is, perhaps, little inferior to Saint Pierre, with all the same characteristics of a substantial French town.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE FRENCH ISLANDS—CLIMATE—COLONIAL GOVERNMENT—WEST INDIAN CONTROVERSY—RECENT MEASURES—CONCLUDING REMARKS.

"Come, we'll argue that matter as we go along."

Poor Gentleman.

If ever you visit the Caribbees, good reader, do not fail to go to the French islands of Guadaloupe and Martinique. They are unquestionably the two finest islands in the whole Caribbean range, surpassing in extent, grandeur, and multitudinous details, any other colony we have yet noticed; and then the French people, always so amusing, so gesticulacious and frisky, with their ethics, their customs, their manners, all in *filigree*, have managed somehow to retain their national and constitutional peculiarities in despite of climate, and all the other antipathetical anomalisms of the tropics.

This is the first point that puzzles a stranger coming to these islands from the English colonies, where the people in general are so deplorably behind time, that they seem resting to take breath, after a heedless pursuit to overtake it; in the French colonies, it is just the reverse, the people walk out in the day, coloquialize, smoke cigars, visit the *cafés*, dance and fiddle, *peste*, *morbleu*, and *sacré*, *con amore*, and after the true Gallic fashion, *sans peur* and *sans reproche*. In one of the English islands, we received at least half a dozen anonymous letters, sweetly feminine and delicately pure, imploring our caution in exposing our valuable existence so much to the solar rays, as if we really had been in danger of being spitted by a sunbeam, or burnt to a cinder by the *calor Bengaliensis*, mentioned by Major Longbow. No, with the exception of an attack of gout, which lasted a fortnight under the skilful surveillance of an Antiguan doctor of medicine, and which proved to be inflammation caused by a chegoe on the great toe joint, where the little pioneer had blunted its tools in attempting excavation, and the effects of that abominable nocturnal freak of the imagination, aided by indi-

gestion; we never had a day's illness in the West Indies—thanks to thee, *flannel* and *calico*—exercise and a liberal diet[1]. A Frenchman makes himself "at home" all over the world, he lives for the moment, regardless of fortuitous contingencies, whilst an Englishman will sit and frame wild fancies in a coal-fire, if he have one, or forecast and fashion, in hideous forms, anticipated evils—but applied to the inhabitants of the French islands in these seas, there are other than constitutional causes for the difference in their habits and the aspect of every thing about them. They are not merely temporary residents, pursuing their commercial speculations, with a view to return to Europe with the fortunes they may accumulate, but they have become located for life, or for so long a period, that they do not speculate upon the time or circumstances which may induce them to

[1] Let it not be supposed we mean to assert that the climate of the West Indies has not been very sickly. In Ligon's time, crape hat-bands and ribband for mourning, were always among the items of an outfit from England—but it is no less certain, that the endemic diseases of the country have become gradually less frequent and fatal, as the lands have been cleared, marshes drained and filled up, and other necessary precautions taken.

change their minds, or allow such considerations to interfere with their living respectably and enjoying the results of their labours. This principle affects proprietors of estates, merchants, lawyers, and all classes of the community. The consequences are every where apparent, and not less so in their statistical relations with the parent state[1]: but they have not been for a long series of years distracted by political controversy respecting their rights, their very existence,—by the dictatorial edicts of a Colonial Office, covertly governed by a "legal adviser," their declared enemy, whilst the heads of the department, changing with every ministry, and oftener, have been made the organs of ignorance and error, of a system of doing and undoing, sufficient to paralyze the efforts, and counteract the

[1] By a return made in the Annales Maritimes, under the authority of the French Government for the year 1831, the inhabitants of Martinique are stated at 23,417 in a state of freedom, and 109,716 slaves. In Guadaloupe and its dependencies, 22,324 free, and 119,663 slaves. A proportion of white inhabitants exceeding that of any of the British Colonies.

Imports from France to Martinique.....	13,554,477f.
Exports to France	12,421,365f.
Imports to Guadaloupe.....	11,053,997f.
Exports to France.....	16,544,171f.

best intentions of those, who have, during the last twenty years at least, wrought rapid and permanent improvement in the condition of the slave population. In the meantime, the *cacoethes scribendi, loquendi, et male dicendi* of fanaticism, and the metaphysical and *system*-atical nonsense of prejudice moved by self-interest,

> " Loud as a drum, which spreading terror round,
> By emptiness, acquires the power of sound ;"

have raised irresistibly in the public mind, partial and discordant notions of the real state of things in these islands. The phantasmagoria of hobgoblins, " gorgons, hydras, and chimeras dire," of Huggins', and Hodges', and Mosses', have so startled and terrified nine-tenths of the people of England, who, being led to believe that such monsters were really a sample of the whole inhabitants of the occidental Indies, might reasonably enough have petitioned for their extirpation, and that being effected, have exclaimed, like the babes in the wood, after Walter had killed Oliver, " Go, kill them again, they can't be too dead." All this time the planters have been placed in the situation of cul-

prits waiting judgment, without even a fair hearing, or like suitors in Chancery, impatient even of the *shell*. Thanks to the liberality of a Whig government, they are to receive a portion of the *oyster*, which should cause every West Indian proprietor, or *mortgagee*, to denounce for ever the opinion of our great Lexicographer, that whiggism is "a negation of all principle [1]."

The Pythian games were instituted to comme-

[1] If Mr. Secretary Stanley would now carry his patriotism so far as to promote the *abolition* of the Colonial Office, as it is at present constituted, and effect the formation of a permanent Council or Board of Management for the affairs of the colonies, whose duties should not be interrupted or trammelled by constant political changes, by the parliamentary avocations, the patronage and party purposes of one individual; whence that mystification which is at present so inexplicably interwowen in the diurnal routine at the office in Downing-street, he would, in our humble opinion, effectuate a blessing upon all who are at present located in our colonies generally, and also upon those who guided by hope and enterprise, may hereafter emigrate, as well as a benefit to the mother country. This might in time redeem the character of colonial management *at home*, abounding as it does in examples of ignorance, error, and folly, and an utter disregard of those apprehensions which ought to be entertained concerning the future welfare of those colonies which are now rising into existence, if their society is to be formed of the refuse of the parent state, its criminals, its runaways, and its paupers. The early history of our West Indian possessions affords a useful lesson in such matters.

morate the destruction of the serpent by Apollo, and some similar demonstration of honour is due to the reformed Parliament for appeasing a monster which, although maintained in the first instance by the nation as one of Queen Elizabeth's pets, and nurtured by subsequent governments with parental solicitude, had at length become so untractable and unwieldy, that it disturbed by its flounderings the whole moral and social system of the empire[1]. John Bull has twenty millions, *at least*, to pay for the sport—for granting to the negroes on our plantations the name of freedom, a name with its adjuncts certainly above all price. But while on the one hand we rejoice that the question has been thus compromised, our conviction is not disturbed, that by the time the provisions of the

[1] The first English ship that traded in slaves to the West Indies, appears to have been commanded by Sir John Hawkins in 1563. He afterwards sailed in one of the Queen's ships of 700 tons, named the Jesus, fitted expressly for the purpose. The African Company was formed in the reign of Charles II. who granted, by letters patent, an exclusive right of trade to Queen Catherine, Mary the Queen-dowager, the Duke of York, and others, forming a company of *royal* adventurers. This trade produced no less a sum to England than 900,000*l.* annually, of which 800,000*l.* was derived from the traffic in slaves.

act which has conferred the boon shall have been carried into effect, that name and all the immunities attached to it, would have been accomplished through the medium of those beneficent measures that were in progress in the colonies, and by the application of some of the essential provisions of the act, as fully and effectually, as slavery was extinguished throughout the Roman empire, and villenage became extinct in England, without the cost of one shilling to this country; and we also venture to affirm, that although the *legal* condition of the slaves has been thus changed, no greater outward and visible indication of any alteration in their moral or physical aspect, and in the several relations between themselves and their masters, will be made to appear by the legislative enactments in question, than would have been produced by the uninterrupted progress of such local dispensations.

The great war-cry against the colonists has been, that they never would move one step towards giving freedom to the slaves, unless driven to it by the interference of the imperial parliament—that they were even opposed to amelioration as a preliminary proceeding. This was not only sounded with

clamorous reiteration when colonial abuses were at their height, when the existence of the slave-trade was alone sufficient to contravene every attempt at improvement, and which necessarily induced a more anomalous character in the society of these islands; but it was continued with increased violence at a time when active measures were in operation, and at no period more so, than when the National Church Establishment was introduced, and the awakening capacities of the negroes were leading them onward to that happy change in their condition which could alone secure to them the blessings of a free state. The slave trade, as far as England was concerned, was abolished in 1808, but the intention of the act was not fully accomplished until the Registry Bill was passed in 1817 [1]. From this period only are we warranted in recognizing the *possibility* of socializing and humanizing the discordant elements of which these communities were composed, of opening a better

[1] Notwithstanding the conventional understanding between Great Britain and her allies, that measures should be adopted for the effectual suppression of the slave trade, it is still carried on to a great extent by other powers, by the French especially.

school of humanity for the planters, and training an ignorant people to the precepts and intentions of a more enlightened policy. Neither ought we to overlook the great difference in the moral and physical capacities of the slaves in the several colonies at that moment, i. e. *seventeen* years ago. They were not a uniform people whose progress could be advanced by the application of a uniform system; but they were divided into distinct communities which had been formed at different periods, and of different African tribes, subjected from time to time to international transfers, and conventional alterations in the laws, and were more or less susceptible of improvement in proportion to the genius and disposition of their respective governing powers, their degrees of civilization, and their removal from their original African stock [1].

These circumstances considered, it would no

[1] Let the candid and impartial reader reflect for a moment, upon the utter impracticability of promoting a permanent improvement in the moral condition of the slaves, during the continuance of the slave-trade, the series of disasters, and the constant changes in the government of these islands, briefly recounted in our historical notices, from their earliest settlement up to the period when the Registry Bill was passed.

longer appear strange that such discrepancies as have been frequently brought before the public, should have existed in the laws of the several colonies, and the colonists generally might have been more free from imputations, which have been founded upon some isolated instances of depravity and misgovernment which have appeared in those communities, among which the growth of moral feeling, and the establishment of social order, have been of later date, or have been retarded in their advancement to maturity.

The picture we have attempted to give in the foregoing pages of the character and condition of the negroes, as they appeared under our own observation during a residence of several years in the West Indies, must clearly demonstrate that they were not the degraded, ill-used beings they were generally represented, and that the planters were not so destitute of feelings of humanity as they have been supposed. We have not intentionally or consciously repeated the sentiments of any writer on this subject—we have merely given a transcript of our notes, recorded at the moment of observation—party feeling, could it now avail, has had no share

in our purpose, and we have no interest whatever, either positive or reversionary in West Indian property, to engender prejudice in the view we have taken. We cannot, therefore, be accused of partiality or of indifference to truth, by affirming that the improvement in the moral and social condition of the slave population during the period we have alluded to, was fully commensurate with the difficulties opposed to it, and that we never heard an intelligent man in the colonies attempt to justify or to advocate a state of slavery, as an irredeemable consequence of legal right; but apprehensions of premature measures to effectuate a change, were not without foundation, and upon that plea alone the planters demanded compensation as a security against an issue it was fearful to contemplate. Let them now look to the future.

Proprietors will do well to apply the remedies in the management of their estates, which past experience has suggested. Much might be said upon the conduct of their agents towards the negroes, whose local attachments we have had occasion frequently to notice: that feeling will be found most predominant among the least efficient of

them; artificers, and "head people" generally, will be the first to enter the field of competition that is opening for them, but in a comprehensive view of the change which must inevitably take place in their disposition, habits and acquirements, we apprehend a greater degree of judgment, persevering assiduity and *tact* will be required in the controul of an Estate, than has been practised under the old *regime.*

Curse that knock!—it has electrified us to the extremities; it has shaken the beautiful white ash from the tip of our cigar, and fairly dismembered our *singular* personage from the *plural* number. I abominate a postman's rap with as much cordial hatred as a West Indian proprietor, who fearfully anticipates that every letter will bring him a hurricane, an earthquake, or an insurrection, an overwhelming flood, or a long drought, an inveterate blight, or—a bill of exchange!—Well, what is it?—

"Messrs. Gilbert and Rivington present their compliments to Mr. Trelawney Wentworth, and beg to acquaint him that the manuscript he has sent to them, far exceeds a proportionate quantity

of matter for the second volume of the 'Sketch Book.'"

Then I must desist; my cigar is out, and the candles have burnt to the sockets—Good reader, good night.

Viva usted mil anños.

APPENDIX.

(A.)

Extent in acres of each of the British West Indian Colonies—the principal towns, with their latitudes and longitudes.

COLONIES.	EXTENT IN ACRES. Culti-vated.	Uncultivated.	Principal Towns.	North Lat.	West Long.
				° ′	° ′
Demerara & Essequibo	800,000	in infinitum	Georgetown ..	6 47	58 1
Berbice	300,000	ibid		6 25	57 10
Trinidad	27,275	1,500,000*	Port Spain	10 39	61 34
Tobago.....	40,000	60,000	Scarborough ...	11 10	60 45
Barbadoes	101,470	5,000	Bridgetown....	13 5	59 44
Grenada.....	50,000	30,000	Georgetown ...	12 3	61 50
Saint Vincent .	50,000	54,286	Kingstown	13 9	61 15
Saint Lucia ...	35,000	60,000	Castries.....	13 57	61 5
Dominica.....	86,436	100,000	Roseau.....	15 18	61 28
Antigua	44,838	15,000	Saint John's..	17 10	61 55
Monserrat	12,000	9,000	Plymouth	16 42	62 19
Nevis.....	15,000	6,000	Charlestown..	17 7	62 44
Saint Christopher's ..	30,126	13,600	Basseterre.....	17 19	62 49
Virgin Islands	12,000	9,000	Road Town, Tortola	18 26	64 39
Jamaica	809,450	1,914,812			
Honduras †....			Balize	17 36	88 32
Bahamas.....	50,000	150,000	Nassau.....		
Bermudas.....	12,500		Saint George's.		

* Of which 147,548 acres have been granted.

† Honduras is a dependency of Jamaica. It extends about 270 miles along the coast.

(B.)

White and free coloured population of the British West Indian Colonies.

COLONIES.	WHITE	FREE PEOPLE OF COLOUR.				
		Males.	Females	Total.		
Demerara & Essequibo	4000	2,530	3,830	6,360	1829	
Berbice	1000	..	..	..	..	
Trinidad	2,700	7,835	8,577	16,412*	1829	
Tobago.....	470	477	686	1,163	1829	
Barbadoes....	15,000	..	..	..	..	
Granada.....	800	1,507	2,236	3,743	1828	
Saint Vincent	1,280	1,091	1,733	2,824	1825	
Saint Lucia....	1,194	1,320	1,716	3,036	1824	
Dominica....	800	1,604	2,002	3,606	1829	
Antigua	3,200	1,549	2,346	3,895	1821	
Monserrat ...	444	337	481	818	1828	
Nevis	500	..	..	..	..	
Saint Christopher's..	1,200	..	..	..	..	
Virgin Islands	300	286	337	623	1826	In Tortola
Jamaica	30,000	..	..	..	..	
Honduras	170	..	..	..	..	
Bahamas.....	3,600	..	..	..	..	
Bermudas...	5,000	..	..	..	..	

* These are stated to be liberated Africans.

(C.)

Slave population of the British West Indian Colonies, exhibiting the proportion of males and females, those settlements that are governed by Orders in Council in England, and those that have local Assemblies.

		COLONIES.	NUMBER OF SLAVES. Males.	Females.	Total.	
Windward, or Eastern Division.	S. A. Contin.	Berbice	11,284	10,035	21,319	Crown Colonies.
		Demerara....	37,141	32,326	69,467	
	Windward Islands.	Trinidad	13,141	10,865	24,006	
		Saint Lucia ..	6,280	7,381	13,661	
		Tobago	5,872	6,684	12,556	Local Administration.
		Barbadoes ...	37,691	44,211	81,902	
		Grenada	11,711	12,434	24,145	
		Saint Vincent	11,583	12,006	23,589	
		Dominica	7,362	8,030	15,392	
	Leeward Islands.	Antigua	14,066	15,773	29,839	
		Monserrat ...	2,867	3,395	6,262	
		Nevis	4,574	4,685	9,259	
		Saint Christopher's ..	9,198	10,112	19,310	
		Virgin Islands	2,510	2,889	5,399	
			175,280	180,826	356,106	
Leeward, or W. Division.		Jamaica.....	158,254	164,167	322,421	
		Honduras *..	1000	1,400	2,400	
		Bahamas	4,608	4,660	9,268	
		Bermudas....	2,208	2,400	4,608	
		Leeward Division	166,070	172,627	338,697	
		Windward Division	175,280	180,826	356,106	
		Total..	341,350	353,453	694,803†	

* Honduras is a dependency of Jamaica, the proportion of males and females is given hypothetically.

† It is to be regretted, that when the Registry Act came into operation, instructions were not sent to the several colonies, requiring the returns of the slave population, (which are made triennially) to be transmitted in corresponding years, and in a prescribed form. In the absence of such an arrangement, the returns from each colony have been made up in different years and in a variety of forms; thus contravening an *exact* estimate of the gross slave population at any one time, and causing much confusion and trouble in the Slave Registry Office in England. The above statement is compiled from Parliamentary Returns made up to July 1830.

(D.)

Aggregate annual value of the productions of each of the British West Indian Colonies, from Parliamentary documents:—

Jamaica	£11,169,661		
Barbadoes	1,270,863		
Antigua	898,220		
Saint Christopher's	753,528		
Nevis	375,182		
Monserrat	211,160		
Virgin Islands	201,122		
Grenada	935,782		
Saint Vincent	812,081		
Dominica	561,858		
Trinidad	735,017		
Bahamas	269,806		
Bermudas	175,560		
Honduras	146,700		
	£18,516,540		
Consisting of sugar, rum, coffee and cotton		8,222,708	
Miscellaneous articles, including cattle, esculents, and fruits		10,293,832	
			18,516,540
Ceded Colonies.			
Saint Lucia	595,610		
Tobago	516,530		
Demerara and Essequibo	2,238,529		
Berbice	629,463		
	£3,980,132		
Consisting of sugar, rum, coffee, and cotton		1,627,223	
Miscellaneous articles		2,352,909	
			3,980,132
		Total	£22,496,672

GENERAL SUMMARY.

Exports to the United Kingdom	12,296,910
Exports to all other parts, including the colonial consumption	10,199,762
	£22,496,672

Sugar estimated at 34*s.* per cwt.; rum, Jamaica, 2*s.* 6*d.* other islands at 2*s.*; molasses at 20*s.* per cwt.; coffee at 7*d.* per lb.; cotton at 9*d.* per lb.; pimento at 6*d.* per lb.

(D.)—*Continued.*

Statement of the total amount of imports from the British West Indian Colonies, and of exports to them from the United Kingdom, during seventeen years, from the official returns made by the Inspector-General of imports and exports, 31st March, 1832.

YEARS.	OFFICIAL VALUE.			
		EXPORTS TO THE BRITISH W. INDIES.		
	Imports from the West Indies.	British and Irish produce & manufacture.	Foreign & Colonial merchandise.	Total of Exports.
	£.	£.	£.	£.
1814	9,022,309	6,282,226	339,912	6,622,138
1815	8,903,260	6,742,451	453,630	7,196,081
1816	7,847,895	4,584,509	268,719	4,853,228
1817	8,326,926	6,632,708	382,883	7,015,591
1818	8,608,790	5,717,216	272,491	5,989,707
1819	8,188,539	4,395,215	297,199	4,692,414
1820	8,353,706	4,246,783	314,567	4,561,350
1821	8,367,477	4,940,609	370,738	5,311,347
1822	8,019,765	4,127,052	243,126	4,370,178
1823	8,425,276	4,621,589	285,247	4.906,836
1824	9,065,546	4,843,556	32 ,375	5,167,931
1825	7,932,829	4,702,249	29 ,021	4,997,270
1826	8,420,454	3,792,453	255,241	4,047,694
1827	8,380,833	4,685,789	331,586	5,017,375
1828	9,496,950	4,134,744	326,298	4,461,042
1829	9,087,923	5,162,197	359,059	5,521,256
1830	8,599,100	3,749,799	290,878	4,040,677

THE END.

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